

## Diagnosis on competitiveness indicators of micro-enterprises in the textile and clothing industry in Cajeme, Mexico

### Diagnóstico sobre indicadores de competitividad de microempresas de la industria textil y confección en Cajeme, México

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#### Abstract

Objective. Establish a diagnosis of the current situation of the textile and clothing industry through external and internal competitiveness variables to determine best practices that facilitate investors' decision-making.

Methodology. The study has two approaches: the qualitative one through the measurement of the perceptions of the entrepreneurs and the quantitative one through the measurement of the results obtained. The research is exploratory, since it works on knowledge gaps that have different results depending on the context; It is descriptive because specific results for micro-enterprises are shown. The research is non-experimental, since there is no control over the variables. Use descriptive statistics to explain the results.

Contribution. Within the variables of competitiveness with respect to the environment, it was found that 61% of entrepreneurs do not know the price of their main competitors' products, 60% decided not to distribute flyers or physical advertisements, 41% of microentrepreneurs do not study supply trends. Future research can analyze the effects of the COVID19 pandemic on the performance of organizations

#### Competitiveness, Competitors, Clients

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#### Resumen

Objetivo. Establecer un diagnóstico de la situación actual de la industria textil y de la confección a través de variables de competitividad externa e interna para la determinación de mejores prácticas que faciliten la toma de decisiones de los inversores.

Metodología. El estudio tiene dos enfoques el cualitativo a través de la medición de las percepciones de los empresarios y cuantitativo a través de la medición de los resultados obtenidos. La investigación es de corte exploratorio, ya que se trabaja sobre brechas del conocimiento que tienen diferentes resultados según el contexto; es descriptivo porque se muestran resultados específicos de las microempresas. La investigación es no experimental, ya que no se tiene control sobre las variables. Utiliza estadística descriptiva para la explicación de los resultados.

Contribución. Dentro de las variables de competitividad respecto al entorno se encontró que 61% de los empresarios desconoce el precio de los productos de sus principales competidores, 60% decidió no repartir volantes ni anuncios físicos, 41% de los microempresarios no estudian las tendencias suministros. En futuras investigaciones se pueden analizar los efectos de la pandemia de COVID19 sobre el desempeño de las organizaciones.

#### Competitividad, Competidores, Clientes

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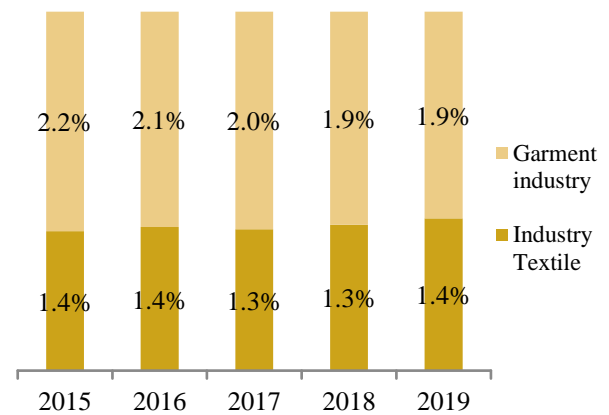
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## Introduction

Every day organizations face different challenges, but one of the main ones is to ensure their permanence in the market. That is why specialization plays an important role, since each nation or region produces those goods or services where they obtain a substantial advantage, either by improving their production costs, provision of natural resources or others (Arancegui, Querejeta and Montero, 2012); Starting from this premise, this research tries to offer a global panorama on the behavior of the micro-companies of Cajeme, Mexico dedicated to the textile industry.

Mexico has been characterized by having wealth in endowment of resources, which has influenced in being a generator of inputs for other countries, that is, an exporter of raw materials. The textile industry has been one of those that has undergone various modifications, mainly derived from the evolution of the technologies used for its elaboration, as well as the tastes and preferences of consumers. In research carried out by Barrios, M. and Cienfuegos, M. (2005) mention that derived from the Free Trade Agreement with North America, the growth and development of the textile sector increased.

According to data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2020) within the publication "Knowing the textile and clothing industry" they mention that this industry was one of the most important in 2019, since within the area of Manufacturing industries contributed 3.2% of the Gross Domestic Product, which placed it in the number ten position of the main manufacturing economic activities. Within the inputs used for the textile industry, 58.9% comes from national companies and the rest is imported; Regarding the clothing industry, it is distributed with 57.1% National and the rest is imported.



**Graphic 1** Participation of the GDP of the textile and clothing industry as a percentage of manufacturing  
Source: own elaboration with data from INEGI, 2020

Derived from the previous premises, a panorama of this industry is provided for Mexico, derived from the previous one, the following problem arises, which wishes to address how the textile and clothing industry is currently in Cajeme's microenterprises in terms of its competitiveness indicators regarding the external and internal environment. This problem has been addressed by various authors such as: Gutiérrez (2017); Yanes-Estévez, García-Pérez and Oreja-Rodríguez (2013); Porter, (2012); Porter, ME (1991) where they mention that organizations must pay special attention to relationships with the environment (customers, suppliers, among others) as well as internal organization (financial administrator, systematization of information to obtain advantages that translate into better financial performance.

Starting from the previous problem, the objective of the research is derived: To establish a diagnosis of the current situation of the textile and clothing industry through external and internal competitiveness variables for the determination of best practices that facilitate decision-making of the investors.

The structure of the article is divided into six sections: introduction, theoretical framework, method, results, conclusions and references. In the first section there is a general context on the topic to be developed, as well as the statement of the problem and the objective to be achieved. In the second section, the frame of reference is presented with different contributions on the phenomenon under study.

The third section presents the method, which mainly uses descriptive statistics. The fourth section shows the results obtained from the investigation, the main findings are cited; while the fifth section presents the conclusions of the research and finally closes with the bibliographic references.

### **Theoretical framework**

Competitiveness between organizations is becoming “fiercer” every day, as a result of which it is necessary to have more tools that permeate the increase in the profitability of companies. A case of success is the one presented by Michel and Barragán (2014) from South Korea, where they have found that trained human resources promote conditions that translate into product innovations, in the same way the development and use of technologies also have a positive factor on the economic development of economic entities. That is why specialization in final goods achieves greater benefits for organizations that adapt more easily.

The textile and clothing industry has reported that they are the generators of 10% of the jobs generated in 2017, within the main three states of Mexico that have the highest textile production are: the State of Mexico with more than 20% of the total; Mexico City with a little more than 17% and finally, Puebla with 17.40%. Regarding the volume of exports, the main States are Coahuila (15.10%) in first place, in second place Puebla (11.60%) and in third place Baja California (8.70%) these data were reported by ProMéxico (2018) with information from INEGI.

For the development of the research, eight variables that influence the competitiveness of the organization were considered, four related to the sector's environment (which are related to the aforementioned competitive forces of Porter (2008) and are: customers, suppliers, competitors and sales channels; and the other four are derived from activities within the organization (internal financial organization, product profitability, business profitability and the employer's direction). The conceptual framework of the variables under study is shown below:

### **Customers**

This variable is decisive, since the organization's sales are directly linked to the number of customers, which means that the higher the volume of customers, the higher the volume of sales. According to Thompson, I. (2006) there are two types of clients: current and potential. The former refers to those who make continuous purchases or who have recently acquired a product or service; in the same way, these are the ones that determine the level of participation it has in the market. While potential customers are those who currently have not purchased any product or service, but it is visualized that in the future they probably will, therefore, they represent the future income of the company.

Customer-centric organizations are in a better position as they can establish different strategies that provide long-term benefits. Of course, when satisfying the client, it does not mean that the competition is left aside, but rather to take both by the hand and propose strategies responding to the needs of the same clients. (Tavira, G., Rosales Estrada, E., Marketing, E., Valor, R., Retention, Y., Analysis, D., & Teórica, R., 2015).

Regarding the importance of clients, Cristerna, Calderón, Ortiz and Lara (2013) mention that clients acquire power when there are few, in the same way when they buy a large part of the production of companies, thereby generating a greater influence on the sale price they receive. If the clients organize themselves, they can negotiate the price with the supplier. As seen, customers are pillars of the business success of the organization, since the lack of them translates into a decrease in revenue.

### **Competitors**

Competitors, according to publications by Pérez and Pérez (2006) define it as companies or people who, due to their characteristics in the products or services offered in the market, satisfy the same needs as another company. Competitors encourage companies to innovate to make product improvements.

The way in which entrepreneurs perceive their competitors is directly based on their hierarchical perception, that is, a counter employee has a different scope in terms of the competitiveness dimension compared to the financial administrator of the organization (Vera and Díaz, 2010). The dimension of the size of the competitors is determined by the volume of deposits they have from the current and future market. The higher the uptake, it is understood that the competitor is larger.

If companies organize to compete together, financial strategies can be generated that increase their chances of success. For example, if in a region several companies import a type of raw material, an alliance strategy could be to negotiate the price in volume with existing suppliers, thus providing the basis for healthy competition and the customer is favored with a decrease in prices of products and services (Socatelli, 2013).

### **Sales channels**

Sales channels are defined as the set of independent organizations that participate in the process in which they make the product or service available to end consumers or businesses (Velázquez, 2012). They are also considered as sets of independent organizations that intervene in the process in which the product is available for consumption.

In other concepts, a sales distribution channel is where different organizations execute the necessary functions to get a product to reach a final consumer. It is also noted that the distribution system could include primary participants who are the wholesalers or minorities who take the properties, and specialized participants in the sales channel who are companies that are intermediaries. (Sierra, C., Moreno, J., & Silva, H. (2015). Sales channels are part of the strategy to reach the final consumer.

### **Providers**

According to Berrenche (2010), suppliers are those who give the company the material, human and financial resources necessary for the operation of the organization, either on a daily or temporary basis.

They provide the raw material for the production of the products or services that organizations offer to their customers. Its importance lies in looking for those that offer quality and competitive price.

Similarly, Castro-Castell, Yepes-Lugo and Ojeda-Pérez, (2016), mention that suppliers carry out activities that benefit both the buying company and them, since they strengthen their capacities through the relationship of trust and promotes better development together, adding value to the supply chain and improving performance.

The same suppliers can be a source of obtaining new technologies in companies, since through the knowledge gap and learning about behavior patterns of buyers, tools that favor the company can be developed. With this, suppliers can help solve problems with new designs (Yacuzzi, 2012).

### **Internal financial organization**

The financial administration of an organization is in charge of all activities related to financing and cash administration, in order to meet the objectives of the company (Van Horne and Martin, 2010). For the purposes of the research in this section What is evaluated are the records used by microentrepreneurs to meet internal information needs. According to Cabrera, Fuentes and Gerónimo (2017) mention that the financial organization is an area in which a management and direction process of each organization is commonly carried out; in the same way, they point out that the size or sector of the same does not matter, since the primary purpose is to make decisions based on previously designed internal control processes.

### **Product profitability**

This section refers to knowing exactly what the volume or profit margin of each product generates when it is sold; In other words, it estimates all the expenses and costs incurred to carry it out and the profitability obtained is established. In order to achieve this, according to Mejía, and Hernández (2010) point out that they must have internal mechanisms that provide them with this type of information, such as the costing systems that they obtain through inventory systems.

In publications made by the consulting firm Deloitte (2011), they mention that profitability by products is part of the strategy that helps in the execution and compliance of the different price policies for products to which the companies involved adhere, giving as results the solution to possible problems that organizations may face in the future. With the establishment of the profitability of the product, the fulfillment of the objectives set is facilitated.

### **Business profitability**

The profitability of the business, according to Flores, Gómez, Briones and Cervantes (2013) citing Michael Porter (1988), refers to knowing the way in which the company uses its resources and how it increases them; this is related to efficiency. When an organization uses financial resources in excess of the benefits obtained by them, that is where it is said that there is a loss.

Profitability will occur when the benefits are greater than the costs of carrying them out. On the other hand, competitiveness is of vital importance for companies in the long term, since based on this, competitive advantages can be developed, such as: encouraging the consumer to pay a higher price for a product derived from the differentiators that are added to it (quality, appearance, brand, among others).

### **Financial administrator address**

The financial manager is in charge of making the decisions that maximize the value of the company; According to Guevara and Simons (2007), they should be able to reduce costs and increase the value of the action. Additionally, it is convenient to carry out an evaluation of the results obtained derived from the decisions taken. Therefore, the functions of the financial administrator are: analysis of liquidity and profitability, carry out the planning of the company (goals), analysis of investment and financing decisions and risk management.

### **Methodology**

The study has two approaches: qualitative through the measurement of the perceptions of entrepreneurs and quantitative through the measurement of the results obtained.

The research is exploratory, since it works on knowledge gaps that have different results depending on the context; it is descriptive because specific results of micro-enterprises are shown. The research is non-experimental, since there is no control over the variables. Uses descriptive statistics to explain the results.

### **Instrument**

For the elaboration of the instrument, a panel of experts was used on its design with researchers from the Technological Institute of Sonora. The input on which the reagents were elaborated was the one used for the survey of the National Survey on Productivity and Competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ENAPROCE) 2015. To give greater certainty to the application of the instrument, it was asked each interviewer to take a photo of the place they visited.

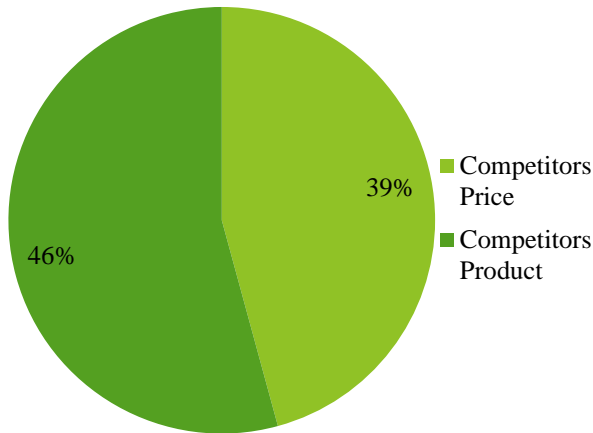
### **Population**

The population was taken as reference the information provided by the National Statistical Directory of Economic Units (2019) of the INEGI, which shows that in the municipality of Cajeme, Sonora there are 77 companies dedicated to the Manufacture of garments and clothing manufacturing / clothing accessories and other garments, of which applying the Sampieri formula with 67 surveyed companies, a reliability of 97% is obtained. For the purposes of the research, 70 surveys were obtained, which gives greater certainty to the research in order to increase reliability.

### **Resultas**

Among the main findings found the following are listed. Regarding the first dimension of competitiveness related to the external factors of the organization, it was found that:

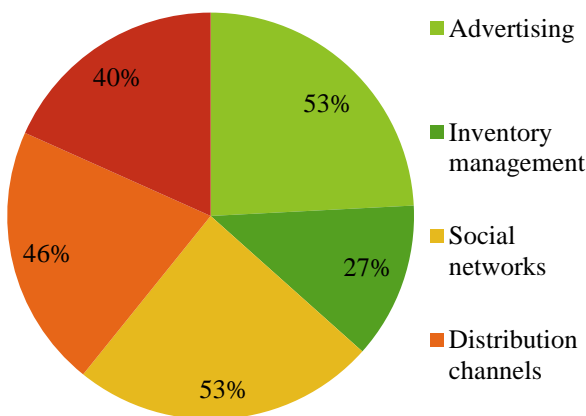
In the Competitors variable, 54% of microentrepreneurs have not visited existing competitors to see the products they offer, in the same way 61% have not verified what the prices of the competitors are with respect to the products they offer; This is not positive, since not knowing who the competition is, causes a poor performance on the design of corrective strategies. The following graph shows the percentage of entrepreneurs who did carry out these activities:



**Graphic 2** Visits of businessmen to Competitors  
Source: Own elaboration, 2020

Regarding the customer variable, it was found that: 51% of the entrepreneurs did ask their customers what their needs were with respect to the products on offer; 30% tried to locate clients who were not satisfied (that is, they stopped coming to the company) to find out why they did not return and 64% offered special promotions to prominent clients within the company.

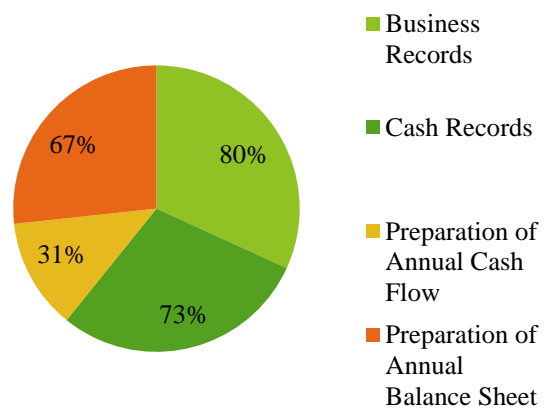
Regarding the findings found in the variable of sales channels, it was found that: 47% of the entrepreneurs did not worry about advertising; 73% did not have problems with their inventories, that is, they satisfied customer requirements without problems; 47% do not use social networks to sell their products or services; 54% have not looked for new distribution channels and 60% did not use the distribution of flyers or advertisements as a strategy. The following graph shows the behavior of the actions that the entrepreneurs did.



**Graphic 3** Sales channels of microentrepreneurs  
Source: Own elaboration, 2020

Regarding the variable of suppliers, it was found that 49% of entrepreneurs do analyze the trends of which suppliers sell the most; 54% try to negotiate the price of their supplies with their suppliers; and 63% analyze which are the existing suppliers in the market to take advantage of opportunities for cost improvements.

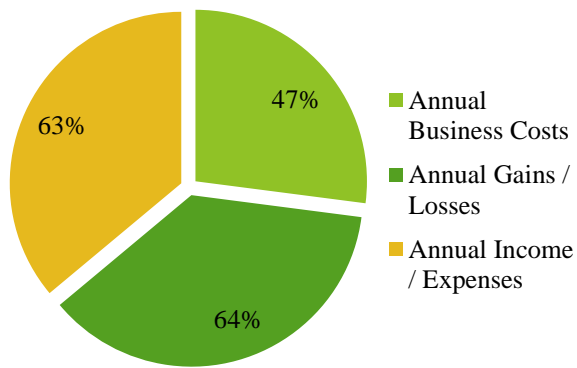
Regarding the internal organization variables of the company, the following was found. Regarding the internal financial organization variable, the entrepreneurs stated that: 20% do not keep records of business operations; 27% do not keep a record of the cash entering the company; 69% do not prepare an annual cash flow and 33% do not prepare their balance sheet. The following graph shows the activities they do with respect to this variable.



**Graphic 4** Financial organization activities carried out  
Source: Own elaboration, 2020

Regarding the product profitability variable, it was found that: 91% of entrepreneurs know the profit per product; 64% know the indirect manufacturing costs; 57% keep a record of sales by product and 76% have knowledge of the cost generated by each of the products sold.

Regarding the business profitability variable, the entrepreneurs stated that: 53% do not know the annual cost of their products and expenses; 36% do not prepare an annual profit and loss statement and 37% do not prepare a document on annual income and expenses.



**Graphic 5** Business profitability indicators

Source: Own elaboration, 2020

Regarding the financial administrator management variable, it was found that: 50% of the entrepreneurs do set annual compliance goals and 56% have a record of the payment capacity they have in case they want to obtain a loan from a financial institution, that is, they know their ability to pay.

## Conclusions

Conducting these investigations allows microentrepreneurs to know what their areas of opportunity are compared to their competitors. In the same way, it can encourage them to develop better strategies that allow them to make better results-oriented decisions that favor the generation of value in organizations. Becoming aware of the environmental conditions and the conditions within the organization reduce its commercial uncertainty.

Among the main findings regarding each variable, it was found that: in terms of competition, 61% of entrepreneurs do not know the price of their main competitors' products, which puts them at a disadvantage, since according to Santos, de Paulo, da Silva, Maskio, and de Araújo (2012) mention that the price of a product has a positive and direct relationship, that is, when the price increases, consumers buy less and vice versa. Regarding customers, it was found that 49% of entrepreneurs do not ask their customers, this puts them at a disadvantage since, according to Rey (2011) this sets the standard for future products that can be launched on the market.

Regarding the sales channels, it was found that the use of print advertising has become obsolete, since 60% decided not to distribute flyers or advertisements, which agrees with Enriquez (2019) mentions that the advertising trends are digital platforms; and in the variable of suppliers, it is worrying that 41% of microentrepreneurs do not study the supply trends that are being demanded more, which puts them at a disadvantage compared to their competitors.

Among the main findings within the internal variables of the business, it was found that 69% do not elaborate their annual cash flow and 53% do not know exactly what their annual costs are, this is an opportunity for improvement since when carrying out these activities they can improve the financial performance of the company. Similarly, entrepreneurs are invited to set annual goals, since according to Rondon (2016) human talent plays a crucial role in achieving the objectives of organizations.

Finally, entrepreneurs must be aware of the areas of opportunity for improvement they have and take concrete actions to turn them into strengths, since if they do not do so, they run the risk of perishing and consequently leaving the market. For future research, it would be possible to analyze the perceptions of other sectors of the same variables and thereby generate knowledge from the experiences of each of the economic agents. Another line is the effects of the COVID19 pandemic, since the application of this instrument occurred during the second half of 2019.

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