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論文題目 The Entrepreneurial Orientation of Tea Manufacturing Firms in Sri Lanka
: A Case Study in Low Grown Areas

(スリランカの製茶工場経営における企業家志向：低産地における事例分析)

The tea industry has played a predominant role in the Sri Lankan economy from more than a century and “Ceylon Tea” as a beverage has been enjoyed by people all over the world for generations. Tea export is contributing nearly 60% to the total agriculture exports and continued to be the major export crop in Sri Lanka. Its high net foreign exchange earning capability caused country to rely heavily on the tea industry. About 2 million people are employed directly and indirectly in the tea industry therefore it has been recognized as an important sector in Sri Lanka for reducing unemployment and poverty.

However, tea industry has undergoes several changes specially, with the presence of low cost producer countries like Kenya, Vietnam and Turkey and that affect the nature of competition in global market. After 2004, Sri Lanka’s competitive state in the global tea arena has been slipping from leading exporter position to third place due to competitive pressure in the global market and several internal supply issues. Sri Lanka becomes the highest cost producer (it is around US\$ 2.33 per kg) among leading producer countries due to productivity issues in field and factory level. Accordingly Sri Lanka is facing high competition from newly emerging producer countries that produce similar teas at a much lower cost. At present, global demand is inclining toward the more convenient types of tea therefore continual focus on orthodox and bulk tea could affect the country’s competitive position. Further, relative trade performance measured by revealed comparative advantage (RCA) indicated that RCA of tea in Sri Lanka is declining and RCA of Kenya is increasing. It is adversely affect the Sri Lankan tea industry.

Accordingly, Sri Lankan tea manufacturing firms facing difficulties to be remain competitive in the current global environment. Therefore, it is important to have proper strategic focus of tea manufacturing firms in the basis of competitiveness. Study conducted by Gupta and Dey (2010) also suggested the requirement of redesigning strategies to enhance the productivity of labour, material and energy. In this manner, intensification of factors which assist for competitive advantage of tea manufacturing firms is fundamental in improving their own performance and will invariably important in facing the competitive challenges arise with the globalization of the tea industry.

It is evident that innovation is essential to overcome the current problems and sustain the competitive position of Sri Lankan tea in the global market. Therefore, it is essential to enhance the entrepreneurial orientation

strategies which help organization to be innovative and remain successful in the global environment since entrepreneurial orientation (EO) reflects the firm's innovativeness, proactiveness and risk taking behaviors, which are predominant factors in mitigating the challenges arising in competitive market of tea. Further, it is vital to identify what factors influence on firm's EO and thereby how EO strategies of tea manufacturing firms are facilitating to adopt innovations.

The general objective of this study is to determine the importance of EO related to innovation adoption of tea manufacturing firms and thereby identify the factors promoting competitiveness. Further, this study is concerned the external and internal determinants of EO. To analyze the external determinant of EO, external relationships and EO will be analyzed. Influence of entrepreneurial competencies will be analyzed in order to discover the internal determinant of EO. This study will also examine how EO affects the innovation adoption of tea manufacturing firms. Thus this study will propose the integrated model to analyze the factors promoting competitiveness by concerning external relationships, entrepreneurial competencies, EO and innovation.

This dissertation consists of eight chapters; the first chapter is introduction. This chapter discusses the overall background of the study. The discussion started by explaining present situation and potential of developing Sri Lankan tea sector. This chapter mentions the general concepts of EO and how EO is curial for firms to prosper in competitive environment by enhancing innovation. Further, analytical frame work and objectives of the study is mentioned in the latter part of the chapter.

To understand the object and area of the study, chapter two describes the conditions of tea industry in Sri Lanka. This study was conducted in the low grown areas of tea where it contributes more than 60% to the national production of tea. This chapter also explains the role of tea industry in the Sri Lankan economy, profile of low grown teas and challenges faced by tea industry. Chapter three describes the profile of tea manufacturing firms and background characteristics of owner/manager in studied sample and descriptive statistics of key variables which are using for further analysis.

As external determinant of EO, the role of external relationships in enhancing EO of tea manufacturing firms was examined in chapter four. The results indicated that external relationships, specifically relationship with supply chain partners and relationship with government facilitating institutions are positively influenced on EO. But, relationships with other tea factories (OTF) and education and research institutions are not significantly influenced since, relationships among firms are depending on the cost and benefits perceived by the firm. Further, findings of entrepreneurial infrastructure implied that benefits received from tea broker companies and government facilitating institutions more likely to have positive relationship with EO. Whereas facilities received from education and research institutions less likely to have significantly correlate with EO. Therefore, policy makers of external institutions should consider about the fundamentals of entrepreneurships when they designing entrepreneurial infrastructure. Findings indicated that among dimensions of EO risk taking behavior of the firm is highly influenced by external relationships than innovativeness and proactiveness. Therefore, well-organized external relationships facilitate to find an optimum solution under the turbulent environment by enhancing firms' EO since by having external relationships, tea manufacturing firms would able to utilize knowledge, physical and emotional resources available outside the firm.

Chapter five analyzes the role of owner/manager's entrepreneurial competencies in improving EO of tea

manufacturing firms as internal determinant of EO. This study considered six competency areas; opportunity, organizing, strategic, relationship, commitment, and conceptual competencies. The results revealed that background characteristics of owner/manager, especially training and other business experience positively influenced on entrepreneurial competencies. Further, it is emphasized that owner of tea factories having higher level of competencies than managers. However, background characteristics of owner/managers do not directly influence on EO of the firm. Entrepreneurial competencies are playing critical role in mitigating the challenges arising in business environment. The findings revealed that EO of the firm improved by strategic and commitment competencies of owner/manager. Among dimensions of EO, innovativeness is positively affected by organizing and strategic competencies while, proactive behavior of the firm increased by conceptual and commitment competencies. Firm's risk taking behavior is positively affected by commitment competency of owner/manager. Accordingly, innovativeness is highly and risk taking behavior is less likely affected by owner/manager's competencies. It can be concluded that owner/managers competencies are highly influenced on successful business strategies which are leading for competitiveness of tea manufacturing firms. Therefore, it is important to enhance the owner/managers competencies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Chapter six examined how EO of firm influences the different types of innovations adopted by tea manufacturing firms. The results imply that market innovation adoptions of Sri Lankan tea manufacturing firms are very low comparing to process and product innovation adoptions. Factors promoting innovation adoption revealed that buyers information as demand factor has more tendencies to enhance the innovation adoption while research and development activities as supply factor is comparatively less significantly increased the innovation adoption of tea manufacturing firms. This study revealed that as dimension of EO, firm's innovativeness is positively affected on product process and market innovation while proactive behavior is enhanced the process and market innovation. However, risk taking behavior is not significantly affected on innovation adoption since tea manufacturing firms tend to adopt innovation than innovation generation. It is evident that innovativeness and proactiveness as dimensions of EO enhance the different types of innovations adopted by tea manufacturing firms in Sri Lanka. That means it is important to enhance EO strategies which are leading for innovation to be competitive in the global market.

For completing the explanation regarding the factors promoting competitiveness in tea manufacturing firms, chapter seven described how the identified theory has been implemented in the practice by using six selected leading tea manufacturing firms. The study revealed that tea manufacturing firms are highlighting two main strategies as quality and quantity to gain the competitive advantage of their firms. Additionally, presence of entrepreneurial parents is also influenced on the firm's business strategies. Thereby all cases confirm that external relationships, owner/managers competencies, EO and innovation are facilitate to improve competitiveness of tea manufacturing firms. Therefore, this study gives the fact that tea manufacturing firms which have better external relationship, competent owner/manager, and good entrepreneurial strategies tend to adopted more innovations and in this manner are competitive in the market.

From this study, it can be concluded that in order to face the market competitiveness as well as contribute substantially to the Sri Lankan economy, it is crucial for the tea manufacturing firms to adopt different types of innovations. It is evident that adopting innovative strategies, depending on the firm's EO and owner/manager

competencies and having better external relationships. Therefore, this study confirms that the reasonability of the proposed approach. It means, external relationships, entrepreneurial competencies, EO, and innovation have been confirmed in this study as factors promoting competitiveness of tea manufacturing firms.

This study has three principal theoretical contributions. First, this study proposed alternative integrated approach to improve the competitiveness by enhancing EO and innovation of tea manufacturing firms in Sri Lanka under developing economic context. Second, this research provides empirical evidence to examine identified relationships in the real business practice. Finally, this study is strengthening the existing knowledge related to entrepreneurship specially related to the tea industry. Therefore, such contributions are important for managers and policy makers to enhance the innovation through better business strategies in order to face competitiveness in the market.