

THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT OF COMPETITIVE POTENTIALS FOR THAI ENTREPRENEURS

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ABSTRACT

Purposes of this research were to investigate the status and the essential success factors influencing the quality enhancement of competitive potentials for Thai entrepreneurs, as well as to analyze the model of quality enhancing the level of competitive potentials. This research utilized a mixed method of research of both quantitative and qualitative technique. With the use of a purposive sampling, a total of 400 sample groups was collected from the population of small and medium enterprises from various industries all over Thailand. An in-depth interview was conducted on ten important informants, selected from the executive management and the entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises in order gain their insight information. The findings revealed that the quality plan, level of participation, and direct rewards were the most important factors for quality enhancement.

Keywords— Entrepreneurs, Competitive Edge, Potentials, Rewards

INTRODUCTION

Small and medium business are an important group of the successful businesses and industries for economic improvement and job creation of Thailand. There are many industries which are the main beneficial of the Thai government policy to promote the importation of local products, which is considered as the major pillars of success of Thai industries such as textile, food processing, auto parts, and so forth, but these industries often depends on the small and medium enterprises and the ability of the entrepreneurs to provide their products with cheap prices and acceptable quality. These entrepreneurs and its industry are becoming so importance in terms of the job creation, exporting, and to the GDP, especially the groups of food and beverage industry, office and equipment industry, and automobile industry. There is an increasing in the proportion of GDP of these industries every year in the Thai economy. Nowadays, there are over 200,000 entrepreneurs all over Thailand. More importantly, there is a real need to enhance the quality of their production and their products to enhance their level of competitive ability to be able to compete in national market, ASEAN market, and globalization market. The vital quality potentials that really need to be improved included the improvement of production process, quality of skill and knowledge of human resources, the improvement of raw materials management, the improvement of the marketing and plan, the improvement of the information technology management, and the improvement of the cooperation between public sector, private sector as well as local community and non-profit organizations.

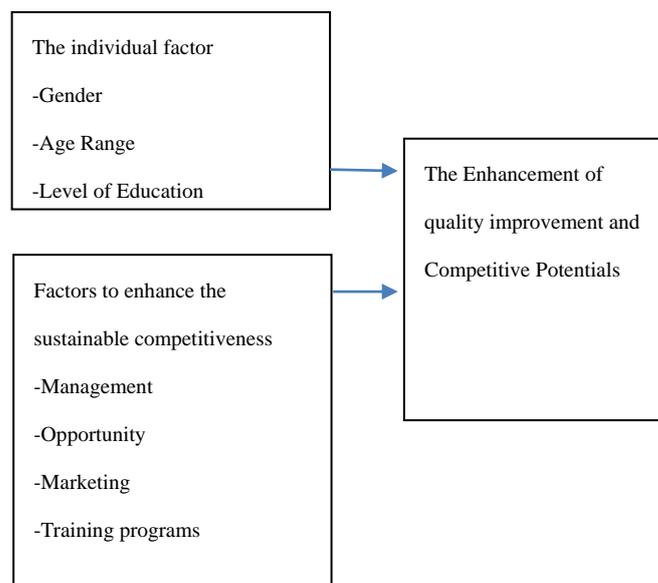
The entrepreneurship and management of its business enterprises affected the whole industry. This is because the process to achieve the objectives by synergistic of the quality of human resources together with the ability to use management skills as well as productions and marketing skills have to be implemented with

skills and experiences to provide the high standard of quality products. The enhancement of quality to improve competitive potentials of these small and medium business enterprises in danger due to high world competitive and, therefore, needed to improve as soon as possible due to the facts that Thailand is an open market and there are many serious rivals from ASEAN nations and world market. In fact, we are living in a constant changing world and to become both innovative and competitive in terms of quality is essential to the success of the business enterprises. The premise idea of quality improvement need to be implement in four areas: organization growth, organization working process, customer orientation, and human resources improvement. The idea of quality improvement can be applied into the Thai small business enterprises. First, the organization growth means the expanding of new management technique and management process and allow the organization to grow. Second, organization working process means to enhance the ability to manage the quality of the organization with the high standard of quality with effectiveness and efficiency. Third, customer orientation means the focus on using ways and guideline to improve a sustainable customers' level of satisfaction as high as possible. Fourth, human resources improvement means to focus on the smart investment in human resources to be more productive, innovative, and creativity. Therefore, it is vital that for the researcher who is interested to investigate the current situation of the entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises and to offer model to enhance the quality improvement of competitive potentials for Thai entrepreneurs. Why is it important to enhance the quality improvement of competitive potentials for Thai entrepreneurs? First, these entrepreneurs are the backbone of the Thai economy. In other words, their successes are the nation's success. Second, they are the source of employment or job creation and income distribution. Their success means there are more jobs available to Thai labor force. Third, these entrepreneurs are hard-working individuals, but their weakness lei in their new knowledge and skills to compete in the modern globalization.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Fig. 1.

Conceptual Framework

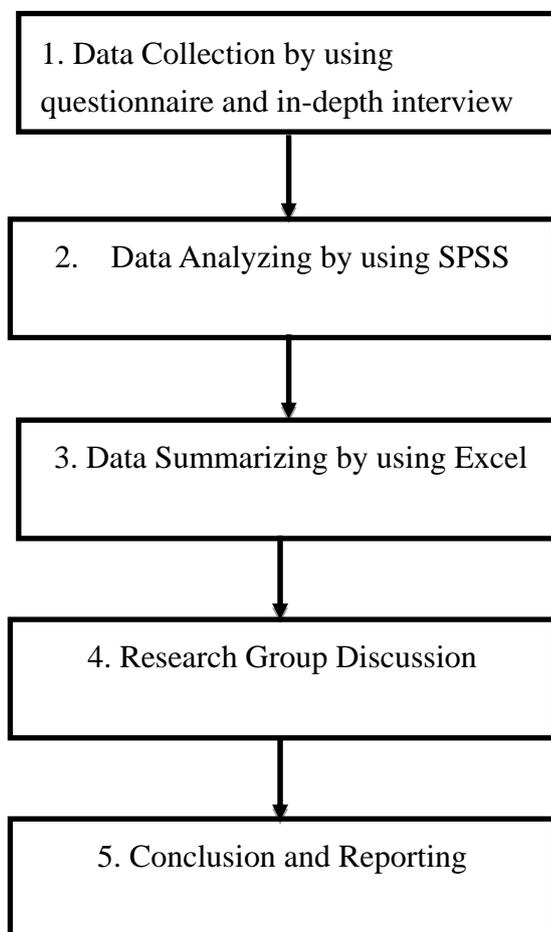


METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a mixed research method of both quantitative and qualitative research method. The methodology of this research can be summed into five steps. First is the data collection which can be collected the information by using five Likert scales of questionnaires as well as the use of in-depth interview to collect an insight information from the informants. Second is to perform the data analyzing by using SPSS program which is an easy, quick, and accurate program for survey research. Third is to perform data summarizing by using an excel program to prepare information to make important decision. Fourth is to bring all information in order to have a group discussion. Finally is to make a conclusion of the finding and reporting the results. These five steps was conducted by the researcher and assistant researcher to ensure that there were no bias in the data collection and data analysis. The research tools included questionnaire which covered three parts. The first part was about the demographic information, the second part was about the survey of the quality enhancement and competitive potentials of the small and medium enterprises. The last part was to allow the respondents to provide any useful comments, insight information and suggestions.

In order to achieve the purposes of this research study and answer the setup of research questions, the mixed research method of qualitative and quantitative technique was considered as the good choice of method of study. The main purposes of this research were to examine the status and the vital factors influencing the quality enhancement of competitive potentials for Thai entrepreneurs in various industries, as well as to analyze the model of quality enhancing the level of competitive potentials. This research study was a mixed method of research of both quantitative and qualitative technique. To make certain that the findings from both research method concurred with each other, which is the way to cross check the findings. By using a purposive sampling which focuses on the entrepreneurs of small and medium business enterprises from all over Thailand who were willing to participate in the survey and had at least an hour to answer the questionnaires, in fact, a total of 400 sample groups was obtained from the population of small and medium enterprises from various industries such as textile, auto-parts, shoes, small appliances, and local community products. An in-depth interview was performed on ten selected important informants on the list of successful entrepreneurs of Thailand, selected from the executive management of various companies. The statistical analysis included mean, standard deviation, one way ANOVA, and Path analysis. Certainly, for the quantitative technique, the questionnaire survey was utilized mainly as a research tool. Whereas, for the qualitative technique, in-depth interview was a better choice as a research tool. For the reliability and validity, the IOC value was tested by five experts in field of survey social and business research until they reached a consensus, then the questionnaire would be used to collect the data. A pilot study of 20 samples was tested and retested until the researchers could obtain the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient value of at least 0.75 and r value of at least 0.2.

Fig. 2
the Process of Research



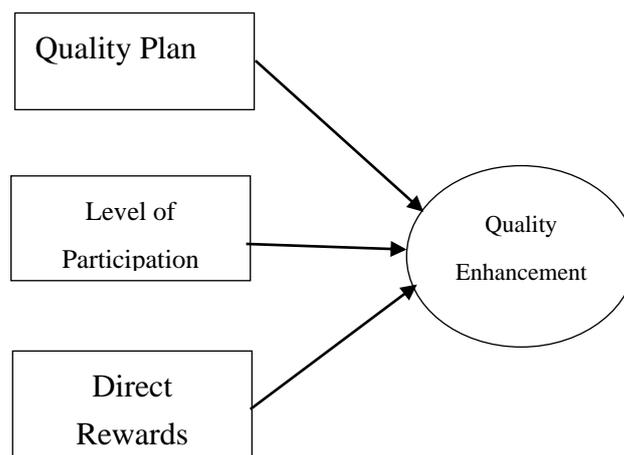
RESULTS

In order to search for the findings and offer guidelines for the ways to create a sustainable ways to enhance the competitive edge of Thai entrepreneurs, the researcher summarized from the information analyzed from the in-depth interview. These fourteen guidelines of an effective ways to enhance competitive management as follows. First is to create a single most important target and one direction of vision to be understood by both management level and all levels of employees in the organization. Second is to have a clear responsibility and proper number of management for each unit and each agency to order to take care of the job assigned. Third is to have a clear and two ways communication and chain of command. Fourth is to significantly assign both authority and responsibility to the right unit and the right person and hold them accountable. Fifth is to assign responsibilities and work tasks to match with the right jobs and the right characteristics of the person who will perform the job duty. Sixth is to provide fair and square discipline in work places and create high standard of working conditions in the organization. Seventh is to have authority with suits for give assignment and command. Eighth is to create the norms and ethics standard that all employees need to understand and practice every day. Ninth is to promote creative working environment and

promote positive working environment. Tenth is to set up a culture that there are always rewards for the best performance and the person who achieved the excellent at work place. Eleventh is to establish a system of high stability for employees in terms of health and benefits in the long term. Twelfth is to keep organization clean and with high standard of working environment. Thirteenth is to have fair wages and compensation as well as the chance for promotion at all levels of employees. Fourteenth is to create a system of harmony of workplace and organization in order for employees to work and growth with the company.

The findings revealed that there were more male respondents than female respondents about 70:30 ratio. Most of them had at least undergraduate degree with more than ten years of experiences. From the survey, the finding revealed that the quality plan, level of participation, and direct rewards were the top three most important factors for quality enhancement. Then, characteristics of boss, budget, training program, knowledge and skills of co-workers, quality program, and the involvement of high level of management were also important respectively.

Fig. 3
Quality Enhancement



In general, the competency is composed of knowledge, skill, attitude, and motive. In order to have superior performance, the competency must have these five factors. First, employees need to have both general knowledge and specific knowledge of their job. Second, employees need to have special skill that come from work experience and training regularly. Third, employees need to have self-concept such as self-image, self-confident, and positive thinking. Fourth, employees need to have specific trait such as leadership, good personality, and good teamwork. Fifth, employees need to have proper motives and attitude to drive them to work hard and work smart to achieve the goals. The importance of competency is to help to management and company to improve the performance as follows. The proper competency helps to select the best employees in terms of knowledge, skills, behavior, and attitude to perform in the organization to achieve the goals. It helps to define the level of performance for each employees and what kind of training is needed by each employee. It also helps to define vision and vision must be shared by both management and employees at all level in the organization.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author of this research study would like to thank Institution of Research and Development of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for commenting, assisting, and supporting this research study as well as for their financial support for this research. In addition, the author would like to thank Assistant Professor Dr. Kevin Wongleedee for proof-reading this manuscripts.

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