The Role of Product Innovation to Gain Competitive Advantage for Women’s Clothing Companies to Increase Selling

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Abstract
This study aims on role of product innovation to gain competitive advantage for Women’s clothing companies to increase selling. This research is applied and surveying type. Statistical population of this study includes all customers of women’s clothing among whom 384 were selected. Data collection instrument included two questionnaires of product innovation and competitive advantage that their reliability was confirmed by alpha Cronbach coefficient. Obtained data from questionnaire were analyzed by Pearson correlation test. The obtained result of research showed the positive and significant relationship between product innovation and competitive advantage aspects including efficiency, quality, innovation, and response to customer of women’s clothing companies.

Keywords: innovation, product, competitive advantage, women’s clothing

Introduction
At the beginning of the 21st century, rapid and all-aspect global changing have evolved organizations activity environment in a way that their organizations and managers should find modern ways to be able to stay in global and domestic competitive era for adaptation with global changes. Actually, successful organization is the one able to get sustainable competitive advantage (Dowlatabadi and Saadat Saaneiyan, 2013).

Competitive advantage is one of elements that guarantee organization sustainability. Competitive advantage randomly and without plan is not obtained, but organizations should move with scientific thought and frameworks in this path (Soltani, 2007). Competitive advantage is a situation that enables agency to provide products with higher quality and efficiency using prior methods and provide more benefits for agency in competing with rivals. An economic unit has competitive advantage when it is able to provide its products with lower costs and higher quality for certain reasons rooted from features of that unit such as place, technology, personnel etc. permanently (Hosseini, 2006). Competitive advantage includes implementing valuable and valid strategies so that rivals wouldn’t be able to copy the existed strategies simultaneously (Gopta, 2004). Competitive advantage is made when products and services of a company perceived by customers are better than the ones from their rivals (Haji Hosseini, Nurzad Moghaddam, 2014).

At the begging of 21st century that is intensive competitiveness era, an institute survival and the main basis of a company’s success are a competitive advantage and its protection. The first and the most principal efficiency of competitive advantage is organization survival guarantee. An organization grows when its survival is guarantees by leaning on competitive advantage and can go through success. Making and protecting competitive advantage needs qualifications to make value for customers leaning on organization abilities. These abilities such as innovation and marketing can influence on competitive advantage can be defined as innovation organizing for priority in market.
Innovation is a process that entrepreneurs change opportunities to providing ideas to market and accelerate changes by this instrument (Ali Ahmadi et al., 2003).

Innovation is defined as providing new products and services obtained by using creativities in various working field. Innovation is application of ideas for new company and in spite of being new, they encompass added-value so that make added-value for customers both directly and indirectly (Mohammadian, 2014).

Innovation is one of vital and key resources to make competitive advantage in daily incremental changing environment (Sehhat et al. (2015)). Effects occurred by increasing innovation in companies make organizations use innovations as a key factor to get competitive advantage. Protecting organizations survival has no other way than obtaining competitive advantage. One of key resources in obtaining competitive advantage is innovation, because innovation is deeply able to root in minds and it can’t be imitated or reproduces easily by new technologies. Product innovation is one instrument to increase competitive advantage for all company members. Today, by so sophisticated competitive environment, the only organizations can continue their activities that reinforce their performances in important organizational abilities such as innovation. Innovative activities are nonstop resources to provide competitive advantage. Organizations try to increase productivity and improve their economic condition by leaning on their innovation (Latifian and Molavi, 2014).

According to competitive market in today world and varieties of models and companies of women’s clothing, the companies are successful which only have innovation of products to get to better market.

Therefore, the present study aims on answering to this question whether role of product innovation in getting competitive advantage for women clothing companies to increase selling and how can be successful by innovation in women’s clothing in competitive world.

**Literature review**

Innovation happens when an idea is developed as product, process, or service. There are various definitions for innovation. Peter Aaker knows innovation as any other explicit activities beside talent and intellectuality that needs knowledge, attention, and attempts of all authorities. He believed that what is common among all entrepreneurs was not a specific type of characteristics but it was systematic commitment to innovation. Mickle Tushman knew innovation as victory condition in business for managers to be able to conduct various unintegrated changes in organization to their resulted scores in identifying technology cycle mechanisms and innovation stream. Creativity and innovation is not the secret talent among people, but it is daily activity for communication which hasn’t seen before and making relationships among issues not usually beside each other. Of course, innovation is also in light of absolute talent, but most innovators have gotten them especially the most successful ones by conscious and purposeful searching of scarce opportunities. (Vahidnia, 2013)

Elements of product innovation include product flexibility, development of new product with technical specifications, permanent development for existed products for easy usage of customers, and customer satisfaction, reduction in producing costs, increase in quality of existed products (Gandi et al., 2011). Competitive advantage is a value organization provide for customers so that this value is not provided by rivals at that time (Hosseini, Meheri, 2004).

Competitive advantage is providing value of an agency to customers so that the made values is higher than customer coasts (Rasekhi, 2008).
Aspects of Competitive Advantage

In resource-oriented school, 4 factors were introduced as aspects of competitive advantage including quality, innovation, efficiency, and responsiveness to customers (Deh Yadegari, 2005).

Efficiency: Efficiency measures input costs needed to calculate a certain produced output. When a company has more efficiency, input costs to produce output is lower. (Rasekhi, 2008)

Quality: High quality product or service is the one to be able to do well the purpose it was designed (Deh Yadegari, 2005).

Innovation: Innovation includes any new solution that a company acts or product products. Innovation includes advances in all producing goods, managerial systems, organizational structure, and made strategies by that company (Rasekhi, 2008)

Responsiveness to Customers: A company should exactly provide what customers want to be responsible in exact time they need. Consequently, a company should identifies customers’ needs to remove them. Responsiveness to customers includes providing values to customers in return of money (Deh Yadegari, 2005).

Many domestic and foreign studies have been conducted about innovation and competitive advantages, some of which are mentioned in the following:

Rezaei Dowlatabaadi and Sadat Saneiyan (2015) in a research worked on analysis innovation effectiveness pattern on sustainable competitive advantages with entrepreneurship approach. This research is applied according to purpose and data was collected qualitatively using questionnaire. For this purpose, Likert standard division questionnaire was used and 110 carpet industrialists were evaluated in Isfahan. Data analysis was done descriptively and deductively using Spp19 and Amos20 software. Results indicates that entrepreneurship is effective on marketing innovation and sustainable competitive advantages so this relationship can be promoted using entrepreneurship. In addition, marketing innovation is related to sustainable competitive advantages directly.

Sehhat et al (2005) conducted a research by purpose of determining the relationship between organizational innovation and competitive advantages in insurance companies. Organizational innovation in this research includes innovation in product, process innovation and administrative innovation. Statistical population of this research is private insurance companies in Tehran city that 130 people were selected as sample size. To collect data, standard questionnaire has been used, to test hypotheses according to questionnaire data, Pearson correlation coefficient, SEM modelling, and single-sample t-test have been used. Research findings show the positive and significant relationship between organizational innovation and generally all its types with competitive advantages in insurance companies and among all types of innovation, innovation in product has the most relationship with competitive advantages in insurance companies. In addition, results of single-sample t-test analysis showed that insurance companies have desirable condition just in process innovation. Palmer et al. (2015) in a research under the title of “innovation in small businesses” showed that innovation in performance, innovation in market, and innovation in product is effective on competitive advantages of small businesses.

Reguia (2014) in a research under the title of “product innovation and competitive advantages” investigated literature review about product innovation and competitive advantages ad concluded that product innovation has positive and significant effect on competitive advantages.

Lew, Y. K., & Sinkovics (2013) in research under the title of “passing boundaries and industry sector” investigated behavioral governance in strategic unity and product innovation to make competitive advantage. Data collected using questionnaire and PLS software was used to analysis data. Results obtained from this research showed that performance in company level influence on new product development only by ability of market development not by innovation in
product. Nonetheless, no significant mediating effect of company size and industry was seen on model.

According to research theoretical framework, research analytical model is provided as follows:

![Research Conceptual Model]

**Methodology**

The method of this research is surveying correlative type and statistical population of this study includes customers of women’s clothing company. Statistical sample volume by Morgan table was obtained 384 for unlimited statistical population. Data collection instrument is product innovation questionnaire including 5 questions and competitive advantage questionnaire including 10 questions. Cronbach alpha coefficient as used to evaluate reliability of instrument that reliability coefficient of product innovation was estimated 0.781 and competitive advantage was estimated 0.785 which were given to statistical sample after evaluating their reliability and validity. Obtained data after collecting questionnaires was analyzed by deductive and descriptive methods. Therefore, the obtained data was purified, classified by descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation test by SPSS software were used in deductive level to test research hypotheses.

**Research Findings**

To investigate research hypotheses, Parson correlation coefficient test has been used.

Hypothesis 1: there is significant relationship between innovation and efficiency of women’s clothing company.

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<th>Table 1: Correlation test of H1</th>
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<td>Product innovation</td>
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According to table (1) and output of SPSS software, it is indicated that correlation coefficient between product innovation and efficient of women’s clothing companies is 0.328. Significance level is 0.000 and less than 0.05. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted in 0.05 significance level.

Hypothesis 2: There is significant relationship between product innovation and quality of women’s clothing companies.
According to table (2) and output of SPSS software, it is indicated that correlation coefficient between product innovation and quality of women’s clothing companies is 0.411. Significance level is 0.000 and less than 0.05. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted in 0.05 significance level.

Hypothesis 3: There is significant relationship between product innovation and innovation in women’s clothing companies.

According to table (3) and output of SPSS software, it is indicated that correlation coefficient between product innovation and innovation in women’s clothing companies is 0.411. Significance level is 0.000 and less than 0.05. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted in 0.05 significance level.

Hypothesis 4: There is significant relationship between product innovation and innovation in women’s clothing companies.

According to table (4) and output of SPSS software, it is indicated that correlation coefficient between product innovation and responsiveness to customers of women’s clothing companies is 0.362. Significance level is 0.000 and less than 0.05. It means that H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted in 0.05 significance level.

Conclusion
This study aims on role of product innovation to gain competitive advantage for Women’s clothing companies to increase selling. Data collection instrument was 2 questionnaires of product innovation and competitive advantage. Obtained data from questionnaires was analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient. Obtained results from research showed the positive and significant relationship between competitive advantages elements including efficiency, quality, innovation, and responsiveness to customers in women’s clothing companies. Results of this research are in agreement with results of the ones by Sehhat et al. (2015), Rezaei Dowlatbadi and Saadat Saaneian (2015), Palmer et al. (2015), and Reguia (2016).
Nowadays, importance, philosophy, an aspect of competitive advantage is not still known fully by managers of clothing industries. Since managers’ knowledge in this issue is a little, unintegrated, and mostly theoretical, it needs more research so a conference will be held about women fitting industries with applicable orientation. According to product innovation in obtaining competitive advantage, it is suggested to hold specialized workshops to make modern ideas in designing product with experts’ presence. In addition, educational periods will be hold for educational periods to increase this knowledge for innovation in products.

References

Openly accessible at http://www.european-science.com