

Analyzing the Influence of International Entrepreneurship on the SMEs Exporting Performance Using Structural Equation Model: An Empirical Study in Jordan

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Received: November 14, 2015

Accepted: December 28, 2015

Online Published: January 23, 2016

doi:10.5539/ijbm.v11n2p153

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v11n2p153>

Abstract

This paper provides an introduction about the field of international entrepreneurship on the export performance. Accordingly, the present study investigating the underlying dimensions of international entrepreneurship and empirically test a framework to identify the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance with special emphasize to Jordanian SMEs. The results of the study reveal that the international entrepreneurship for Jordanian SMEs had a significant impact on exporting performance. The significance of this study stems from the fact that lacks of studies have investigated on the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance. Also, it provides a reference for countries, firms and scholars interested in international business.

Keyword: international entrepreneurship, export performance, SMEs, structural equation model

1. Introduction

Nowadays, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are becoming increasingly significant in the process of exporting and industrialization in developing countries. SMEs considered as the largest cluster of industrial elements in these countries, and have made a significant contribution to manufacturing productivity and employment level. Furthermore, there is an expectation that SMEs will use leading edge technology and invest heavily in exporting and contribution to the Gross National Product (GNP) in general. International entrepreneurship refers to the procedure through which an individual conducts any activity of business in the international market. These activities of business by the entrepreneur may be of many diversified kinds such as sales, exports, licensing businesses, or anyway to operate internationally. Entrepreneurs need to analyze their performance internationally in order to survive and achieve competitive advantage. Since the performance was considered as the significant and vital element in order to determine the success of the operations of any business.

This study has been focused on the international entrepreneurship and the main dependent variable of this study is the small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The export success can be conceptualized by two different ways as highlighted by Katsikeas and his colleagues (2000). Export performance as per the first approach is viewed as the export adaptively, export efficiency, and export effectiveness. However, assessing performance is still difficult, particularly in a worldwide setting, which has made the assessment of firm's export performance generally an indefinable objective.

As a result assessing export performance could be considered as the significant barometer to predict and indicate the success of the operations carried out by the SMEs (Jalali, 2012). In this research, numerous academic fields have been covered such as performance management, strategic management, entrepreneurship, and international business. The present study investigating in the underlying dimensions of international entrepreneurship and empirically test a framework to identify the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance with special emphasize to Jordanian SMEs.

2. Research Significance

This study expects the following contributions:

- Provide a reference for researchers who interested in international entrepreneurship and export performance.
- Determine the underlying dimensions of international entrepreneurship and empirically test a framework to identify the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance with special emphasize to Jordanian SMEs.

3. Research Problem

International entrepreneurship can make a significant difference to a company's ability to compete. SMEs are becoming increasingly significant in the process of exporting and industrialization in developing countries. SMEs have made a significant contribution to manufacturing productivity and employment level. As a result assessing export performance could be considered as one of the key indicators of the success of a firm's operations (Jalali, 2012). Accordingly this study will try to answer the main question "what are the impacts of international entrepreneurship on the export performance of the Jordanian SMEs?"

4. Literature Review

4.1 International Entrepreneurship

International entrepreneurship introduced by Morrow in 1988 and has much attention by researchers after that. Since the beginning, the operating domains of the businesses are identified as the first phase of the operations of the SMEs engaged in the international entrepreneurships. International entrepreneurship alludes to create universal new pursuits or new businesses globally. McDougall and Oviatt (2000) characterize the international entrepreneurship as "A mix of imaginative, proactive, and the behaviors of the entrepreneurs to avert any kind of risk that could be compared with the national fringes and is proposed to make esteem in business associations." Furthermore, McDougall and Oviatt have re-described the international entrepreneurship as "the revelation, establishment, assessment and misuse of all the opportunities crosswise over national outskirts to produce future services and goods (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005, p. 540). To better understanding of international entrepreneurship it is important to review the definitions of entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurship is defined as "the process of creating new opportunities in the international market related to boosting the economic activities", (Davidson, Delmar, & Wiklund, 2006, p. 27). One more meaning of entrepreneurship is "the revelation of new chances and the consequent formation of new financial action, regularly by means of the production of new associations" (Reynolds, 2005). On the other hand, internationalization is defined as "the procedure by which enterprises both expand their attention to immediate and aberrant impact of global exchanges on their future, and build up and direct exchanges with different nations"(Beamish, 1990, p. 77). Internationalization is entrepreneurial as it is connected with imaginativeness: global business sector passage or the entry mode frequently requires new inventive items or items that have been adjusted to remote business sector inclinations (Zahra, Halton, Marcel, & O'Neill, 2001). In order to measure of international entrepreneurship, types of international entrepreneurship activities such as the extent, speed, and scope of a firm's international operations were used as showing the following Figure 1:

<i>Main Dimensions/ Perspectives</i>	<i>Sub-Dimensions</i>	<i>References</i>
<i>International Entrepreneurship</i>	Extent/degree of Internationalization	<i>Casillas, et al. (2010)</i> <i>Zahra, et al. (2000a)</i> <i>Zahra, et al. (2000b)</i> <i>Burgel & Murray (1998)</i> <i>Karagozoglu & Lindell (1997)</i> <i>Reuber & Fischer (1997)</i> <i>Bloodgood, et al. (1996)</i> <i>McDougall & Oviatt (1996)</i> <i>Brush (1995)</i> <i>McDougall, et al. (1994)</i> <i>McDougall (1989)</i>
	Speed	<i>Felzensztein & Parra (2013)</i> <i>Birgit & Antonella,(2011)</i> <i>Casillas, et al. (2010)</i> <i>Zahra & George (2002)</i>

		<i>Zahra, et al. (2000b)</i>
		<i>Burgel & Murray (1998)</i>
		<i>Reuber & Fischer (1997)</i>
		<i>Fontes & Coombs (1997)</i>
		<i>Lindquist (1997)</i>
		<i>Roberts & Senturia (1996)</i>
Scope	Countries	<i>Felzensztein & Parra (2013)</i>
		<i>Birgit & Antonella,(2011)</i>
		<i>Casillas, et al. (2010)</i>
		<i>Zahra & George (2002)</i>
		<i>Zahra, et al. (2000a)</i>
		<i>Roberts & Senturia (1996)</i>
		<i>Burgel & Murray (1998)</i>
	Regions	<i>Reuber & Fischer (1997)</i>
		<i>Roberts & Senturia (1996)</i>
		<i>Birgit & Antonella,(2011)</i>
		<i>Zahra & George (2002)</i>
	<i>Intensity</i>	

Figure 1. International entrepreneurship measurements

In international business research, many scholars and researchers have proposed numerous and alternative ways to measure the degree of internationalization of the enterprises, but there have been many disagreements and therefore, a common measurement tool has not yet been proposed. Nevertheless, it's referring to the firm's activities abroad and relating to the close of the firm to international markets.

4.1.1 Extent/Degree of Firm's International Operations

The firm's degree of internationalization may also have an impact on the extent to which it uses external services to acquire information and knowledge. First, the process of internationalization increases the scope of markets beyond the domestic scale, and compels firms to enrich and expand their knowledge base and innovation opportunities. Recently, Casillas et al. (2010) states that domestic firms normally develop and build their existing resources and capabilities, whereas internationalized firms need to develop new routines and organizational processes. This implies that firms must acquire new knowledge to adapt their processes and structures.

4.1.2 Speed of Firm's International Operations

Although, the influence of institutional networks on international entrepreneurship may vary in the different phases of the internationalization process, however, some authors suggests that it had significant impact on the speed of new entry, reduced risks and uncertainty associated with foreign market environments and thus lead to positive attitude toward international entrepreneurship. (Felzensztein & Parra, 2013; Fontes & Coombs, 1997).

4.1.3 Scope of Firm's International Operations

The degree of internationalization estimates the scope of international activities of a firm. Appropriate measures are discussed in the literature, and some argue for a multidimensional approach (Zahra & George, 2002). However, degree of internationalization is often captured with the single measure of foreign sales over total sales. Following previous studies (Burgel & Murray, 1998; Reuber & Fischer, 1997), country scope is measured as the number of foreign countries to which an SME's products have been exported.

4.1.4 Intensity of Firm's International Operations

The international entrepreneurship dimension also denotes to the advancement or upgrade of items and administrations, for example, new managerial systems and/or advances for enhancing the universal authoritative operations of the firm (Birgit & Antonella, 2011). The international entrepreneurship identifies with forces situating in respect to contenders with an accentuation on the execution and on-going responsibilities in quest for the organizations expansion into worldwide business sector destinations (Zahra & George, 2002). It has additionally been proposed that with a 'forward-looking' point of view, proactive firms have the longing to be pioneers, in this manner benefiting from new and existing global business opportunities (Zahra & George, 2002). Thirdly, international risk-taking inclination signifies the readiness of the international entrepreneurs to make ventures and confer assets to extend that have unverifiable results or unusually high profits and/or losses (Birgit & Antonella, 2011).

4.2 SME's in Jordan

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) considered as a main tributary for the Jordanian economy. Besides, around (98%) of all organizations in Jordan are delegated as the SMEs, two third of which have under (19) workers (DOS, 2011). Also, a shared belief that attain sustainable growth in employment it must rely heavily investment on the smaller firms (AL-Hyari et al., 2012). Moreover, confrontations the hyper- competition, Jordanian SME's are working aggressively to export development their products and services.

4.2.1 SME's Classifications in Jordan

Ministry of Industry and Trade in Jordan has classified SME's based on the number of employees and the paid capital investment as summarized in the following Table 1:

Table 1. SME's classifications in Jordan

Classification	Capital Investment (JOD)	No. of Employees
Micro	Less than 30,000	1 – 9
Small	30,000	10 – 49
Medium	30,000	50 – 249
Large	30,000	250 and above

In Jordan, the main challenges faced by the SMEs are the employment of skilled labors, deployment of innovative technologies, origination or formation rules, product specifications, compliance of the requirements of the international markets, exporting requirements, intense competitions, and market liberalization. Nonetheless, Al-Hyari mentioned that the main problems faced by the SMEs are the deployment of innovative technologies, the resource requirements such as the funds and financing, price competitions specifically on the foreign goods and items, lacking of skills of business planning, lacking the employment of skilled labors, and accessibility of new markets.

4.3 Export Performance

The export performance was considered as the significant and vital element in order to determine the success of the operations of any business. The export success can be conceptualized by two different ways as highlighted by Katsikeas and his colleagues (2000). Export performance as per the first approach is viewed as the export adaptively, export efficiency, and export effectiveness. And the export performance as per the second approach is viewed as the non-economic and economic results in order to determine the success of the operations. Export performance concept has much attentions of managerial and academic researcher due to the globalization that has turned into an undeniable realism and driven an expanding number of enterprises to scan for circumstances abroad to survive in this situation and therefore made exporting typically a subtle objective for some organizations (Sousa, 2004). Furthermore, the important of export performance indicators are the monetary measures regarding sales related measurements, for example, income and market share in respect to their rival firms, and benefit related measurements, for example, benefit proportion and profit margins (Oliveira, Cadogan, & Souchon, 2012). Moreover, assessing performance is still difficult, particularly in a foreign market connection that has made the assessment of export performance of the SMEs generally a subtle objective. As a result assessing export performance could be considered as one of the key indicators of the success of a firm's operations (Jalali, 2012). Thus, Export performance can be defined as the degree to which the firm accomplishes its goals when selling an item to an international business sector (Navarro et al., 2010). There still lies no accord to gauge and measure the export performance although there are two different approaches that have been suggested by Ebrahimabadi, and Shahmoradi (2014) in order to measure the export performance and these approaches are: objective measurements criteria and subjective measurements criteria. Objective and subjective measures are reciprocal in nature and it is suggested to make utilization of both in an interrelated path keeping in mind the end goal to give a more extensive image of export performance (Stoian, Rialp, & Rialp, 2011). Nonetheless, utilizing of subjective measures has been proposed in situations where managers may be unwilling or not able to give objective monetary information or on account of the trouble in accommodating cross-national or cross-industrial contrasts in bookkeeping practices, differences and disparities in return rates, and financial reporting among the host and home nations. Objective measurements criteria have five performance measures namely: export intensity and export intensity growth, export sales growth and export sales volume, and export sales efficiency. However, Economic measures are surely relevant. In the same way, some market also consider strategic measures might be interesting to benefit some broader, not only short-term oriented and aspects of the

export activity (Carneiro et al., 2007).

Main Dimensions/ Perspectives	Sub-Dimensions		References
Export performance	Objective/ Economic measures	Financial	Taleghani, et al. (2013)
			Acikdilli, G., (2013)
		Market	Jalali, S. H., (2012)
			Carneiro, et al. (2007)
			Leonidou, et al. (2002)
	Subjective/ measures	Non-Economic	Strategic
			Acikdilli, G., (2013)
		Satisfaction	Vahid, et al. (2013)
			Jalali, S. H., (2012)
			Carneiro, et al. (2007)
		Carneiro, et al. (2007)	
		Leonidou, et al. (2002)	

Figure 2. Export performance measurements

Economic measures related to the financial impact such as profitability, sales, also related to the non-exporter vs. exporter contradiction, situational or behavioral related with outlooks to exports, market (e.g., customer satisfaction, reputation, market share). Moreover, the strategic measures includes accomplishment of wider, commonly extended period, purposes for example increasing capabilities and reacting to a rival enterprise, inwards the business frameworks. Also, general assessment related with perceived achievements and fulfillments with export activities, in additional to the confirmation of expectations (Carneiro et al., 2007). Figure 3: Classification of export performance measures reveal exporting performance suggested by Carneiro et al. (2007).

Objective measures	<i>Sales-related</i>	Export intensity
		Export intensity growth
		Export sales growth
		Export sales volume
		Export sales efficiency
	<i>Profit-related</i>	Export profitability
		Export profit margin
		Export profit margin growth
		Market diversification
<i>Market-related</i>	Export market share	
	Export market share growth	
	Market diversification	
Subjective measures	<i>Sales-related</i>	Export intensity
		Export intensity growth
		Export intensity growth compared to competitors
		Export sales volume
		Export sales growth
		Export sales volume compared to competitors
		Export sales growth compared to competitors
		Export sales return on investment
	Export sales return on investment compared to competitors	
	<i>Profit-related</i>	Export profitability
		Export profit margin

	Export profit margin growth
	Export profitability compared to competitors
<i>Market-related</i>	Export market share
	Export market share growth
	Export market share compared to competitors
	Export market share growth compared to competitors
	Market diversification
	Rate of new market entry
	Rate of new market entry compared to competitors
	Gaining foothold in the market
<i>General</i>	Overall export performance
	Overall export performance compared to competitors
	Export success
	Meeting expectations
	How competitors rate firm's export performance
	Strategic export performance
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	Contribution of exporting to the growth of the firm
	Contribution of exporting to the quality of firm's management
	Quality of distributor relationships
	Quality of distributor relationships compared to competitors
	Customer satisfaction
	Customer satisfaction compared to competitors
	Quality of customer relationships compared to competitors
	Product/service quality compared to competitors
	Reputation of the firm compared to competitors
	Gaining new technology/expertise
	Building awareness and image overseas
	Achievement of objectives regarding response to competitive pressures

Figure 3. Classification of export performance measures

4.4 Structural Equation Model

Structural equation model (SEM) is the statistic test that assists in assessing the casual relations utilizing the qualitative information and the quantitative data and tests the hypotheses. Structural equation model (SEM) compares the theory development with the theory testing and therefore it permits to assess the data by modeling both the exploratory and confirmatory analysis. In this study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilized so that the assessment and validation of the relation amongst the observed values and covert (dormant) constructs could be made. Additionally, the measures of the data need to be activated so that the analysis and test amongst the variables can be done. According to Bollen and Long (1999), the developed model is linked and analyzed with the observed values so that the determination of model fit could be done.

5. Research Hypotheses

To achieve the purpose of this study, the researchers have formulated main hypothesis that analyze the influence of international entrepreneurship on the export performance, accordingly, there are four sub-hypotheses related to international entrepreneurship dimensions as following:

- H1: The extent of internationalization for SMEs in Jordan has a positive effect on the export performance.
- H2: The speed of international operations for SMEs in Jordan has a positive effect on the export performance.
- H3: The scope of international operations for SMEs in Jordan has a positive effect on the export performance.
- H4: The intensity of international operations for SMEs in Jordan has a positive effect on the export performance.

6. Research Design and Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Accordingly, the primary data sources were targeted

based on a questionnaire which was randomly distributed on the Jordanians manufacturing SMEs. The sample determined by ministry of industry and trade in Jordan as small and medium in organizational size (which employing 249 personnel or fewer). And the total number of questionnaires that were subject to analysis over the entire study population was 279. The questionnaire used for this study contained the items that were based on the Likert scale of 5-pointers where 5 being the best denoted “strongly agree” and 1 being the least denoted “strongly disagree”. On the other hand, different online library databases, books, journals, articles, and past literature were reviewe in order to extract required information from the secondary data sources.

6.1 Analysis

This study has utilized the different software like Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for the purpose of analyzing the gathered data and thereby tests the developed hypotheses of this study. Moreover, structural equation modeling (SEM) has also been used in this study in order to integrate path and factor analysis.

6.2 Measurement Model

A small group of the participants as well as few scholars were contacted so that the face validity of the developed survey questionnaire could be measured or tested and for the purpose of testing the survey questionnaire’s reliability, SPSS was used for generating the results of Cronbach’s Alpha. The outcome revealed that the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was .743 for international entrepreneurship constructs, and .791 for exporting performance construct which refer the questionnaire is reliability. To test whether the data fit a hypothesized measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess and validate the relationships between each latent constructs and the observed measures. This hypothesized model is based on theory and previous analytic research. The following figure showed the measurement model which presented the overall relationships.

The result of analyzing confirmatory factor analysis showed in the below Table 2.

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Index	Value
Chi-square value (χ^2)	176.551
Degrees of freedom (df)	278
Chi-square paradigm by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df)	1.032
Statistical significance (p)	.370
Standardized root mean residual (SRMR)	.0418
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	.944
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	.925
Comparative fit index (CFI)	.997
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	.996
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	.011.

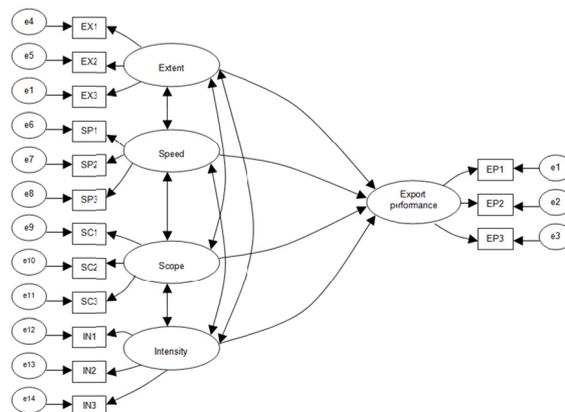


Figure 4. Research measurement model

It is observed from previous table that Chi-square paradigm by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) = 1.032 which supports the four factor model in proficiency group since the (χ^2/df) should be 3:1 or less according to (Hair et al, 2010), also Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) in other words, appropriate model index “how well the model fits the data?” (0.944) asymptotic to 1, also at the same time CFI was (0.997) that means it asymptotic to 1 too. Another test of model fit (RMSEA) The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation 0.011 is considered to indicate good fit.

Table 3. Composite of reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE)

Constructs	Measures	Standardized Estimate	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Extent	EX1	.632	.75	.50
	EX2	.768		
	EX3	.716		
Speed	SP1	.884	.82	.61
	SP2	.769		
	SP3	.671		
Scope	SC1	.878	.89	.74
	SC2	.834		
	SC3	.865		
Intensity	IN1	.878	.77	.54
	IN2	.667		
	IN3	.624		
Export Performance	EP1	.675	.75	.51
	EP2	.872		
	EP3	.567		

We have noted from Table 3 that all variables were subjected to a composite reliability (CR) were exceeding the recommended threshold of .70 indicating conformity with thresholds, and also all the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values greater than .50, which indicating to enough evidence supported convergent validity.

6.3 The Structural Model

The estimated results of the hypothesized theoretical model are shown in Figure 5.

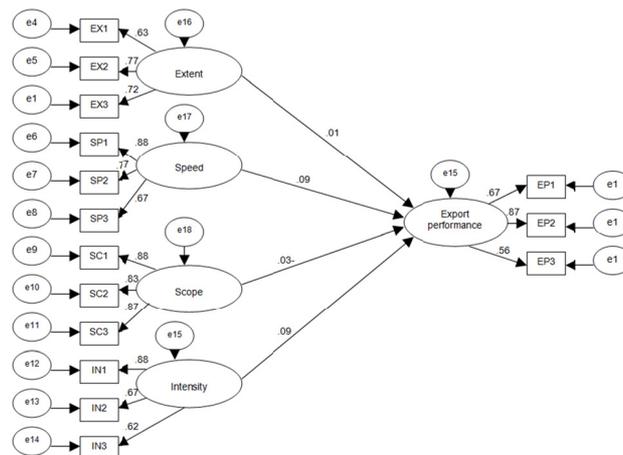


Figure 5. The Structural model

The structural model diverge the measurement in consternations toward the relationships between latent constructs and analyzed variables to the nature and intensity of the relationships between constructs (Hair et al., 2010). The results reveal that (as shown in the below Table 4) χ^2 statistic was significant ($\chi^2 = 210.486$; $d.f. = 178$; $p < 0.05$), and goodness of fit index (GFI) = (0.933) and adjusted goodness-of-fit index AGFI = .912 were asymptotic to 1, also at the same time CFI was (0.983) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .980 that means it asymptotic to 1 too. Another test of model fit (RMSEA) The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation 0.026 and SRMR = 0.069 were considered to indicate good fit.

Table 4. The result of analysis

Index	
Chi-square value (χ^2)	210.486
Degrees of freedom (df)	278
Chi-square paradigm by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df)	1.155
Statistical significance (p)	1.964
Standardized root mean residual (SRMR)	.069
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	.933
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	.912
Comparative fit index (CFI)	.983
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	.980
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	.026

Accordingly, Chi-square value Demonstrated superior result than the first evaluation of the confirmatory factor analysis (χ^2) statistics = 210.486; (χ^2/df) = 1.155, Degree of freedom=278, $p > .05$). The second construct evaluation was significantly affecting on exporting performance of Jordanian SMEs since the t-test value ($t = 1.964$, $p < .05$) which supporting H1, H2, H3 and H4.

7. Discussion

The international entrepreneurship has become a prominent and most known phenomenon in the world of international business and it has recognized itself as a major force in the global economy. This concept of international entrepreneurship has developed from focusing on just the smaller firms operating in foreign markets to practices and behavior of larger multinational firms venturing with other even larger firms in foreign marketplace and thereby enhancing the scope of international entrepreneur to corporate internal entrepreneurship. The structural model has tested the research hypotheses and set up that the international entrepreneurship for small firms had a significant impact on exporting performance. Thus, important questions should answer how international entrepreneurship in terms of (extant, scope, speed and intensity) contributes to Jordanian SMEs exporting performance and this question definitely requires more attention in the future. In general, studies have examined the relationship between international entrepreneurship and export performance, but overlooked the potential contribution of exporting performance in Jordan. Thus, it offers useful insights and opens new avenues to conceptualize how international entrepreneurship might influence the exporting performance.

8. Conclusions

The present study investigating in the underlying dimensions of international entrepreneurship and empirically test a framework to identify the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance with special emphasize to Jordanian SMEs. Moreover, we have examined the impact of international entrepreneurship (namely, the extent, speed, scope, intensity) on the exporting performance; the results of the study reveal that the international entrepreneurship for Jordanian SMEs had a significant impact on exporting performance. The significance of this study stems from the fact that lacks of studies have investigated on the impact of international entrepreneurship on the exporting performance. Also, it provides a reference for countries, firms and scholars interested in international business.

9. Research Implications

The study has identified the dimensions (Extant, scope, speed and intensity) by which the international entrepreneurship could be measured and these identified factors are critical for rate of success of entrepreneurship in one country and for Government led campaigns regarding the promotion of new entrepreneurs for the foreign nationals to achieve their objectives. If the Jordan government wishes to 'invite the world to invest' and become the world's greatest platform for providing international entrepreneurship opportunities, it must develop a thriving sector based on these dimensions.

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