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AGUASCALIENTES TEXTILE MICRO-ENTERPRISES: PIONEERING E-MARKETING AND INNOVATIONMARÍA ALEJANDRO

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Abstract

This study addresses the pressing issue of sustaining micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the competitive market landscape. In today's business environment, enhancing competitiveness and performance is imperative for their survival. Despite the global significance of this challenge, a significant proportion of these businesses face early closure, reflecting a shared trend both in Mexico and worldwide. The textile industry in Aguascalientes, Mexico exemplifies this vulnerability, marked by traditional practices and stagnant growth. This research focuses on micro-companies within this sector, which are particularly susceptible.

The global textile industry's substantial valuation and consistent growth underscore its economic importance. Mexico stands as a vital player alongside China, India, and Bangladesh. Despite employing a substantial workforce, this sector is grappling with neglect, leaving numerous businesses on the brink of collapse. This study intends to address this neglected sector's challenges and devise strategies for the revitalization of micro-textile businesses in Aguascalientes. By exploring innovative approaches and modernizing traditional practices, this research aims to contribute to the sector's resurgence, thereby benefiting both the local economy and the broader textile industry. Through a comprehensive analysis, this study seeks to equip MSMEs with tools to not only navigate the competitive landscape but also thrive and evolve.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, the study of strategies that help micro, small, and medium-sized companies to remain in the market has become of great relevance, since they need strategies that boost their competitiveness and performance (Valdez, Ramos, & Borboa, 2019). In Mexico, only 30% of companies exceed their third year of life (López, Gómez and Sánchez, 2020), as in the rest of the world (Ávila, Moreno, and Ocegueda, 2018), in such a way that, within in this situation, the most vulnerable companies are micro-companies. Micro-enterprises are classified as having fewer than 10 employees and having sales of less than 4 million pesos per year according to the organization for cooperation and economic development (OECD, 2013). In Aguascalientes, the textile sector has been characterized as a sector in decline and rather obsolete technology-wise. Most activities in these companies are still carried out in a traditional way, as a consequence this industry is characterized by low growth rates at the business level (Vila and Küster, 2010).

In 2019, the textile sector in the world was valued at more than 900 billion dollars, with a growth rate of 4.3% for 2020, with Mexico being one of the four most important countries for this sector, along with China, India, and Bangladesh (Grand view research, 2020). According to the Mexican Institute of Social Security (2015), Mexico employed more than 400,000 people in the textile sector, not including those employed in informal enterprises within this market. However, despite its value and the large number of people it employs, the textile sector in Mexico has been neglected to such a degree that more and more companies are on the verge of failure, which makes this research relevant.

E-marketing involves those marketing strategies in which digital tools are used to transmit and commercialize. This is where the use of the internet and information and communication technologies are applied to marketing turning it into E-marketing. Starting from the definition of marketing as a "social and administrative process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through the creation and exchange of valuable products with others" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), for this case, applied by electronic means.

There are different definitions of innovation, mainly because it is a highly relevant topic and therefore it has been taken up by a large number of researchers. Piening and Salge (2015) defined it as the introduction of a new or significantly improved product, process, or management system. Innovation plays a key role in the generation of ideas and the development of projects as well as in turning these two into competitive advantages (Barreto, 2017). Finally, this research focuses on how innovation and E-marketing, as strategies, influence business success. Therefore, it is important to define performance as the ability to measure business results to compare results in relation to the proposed objectives (Lonnqvist, 2004). In such a way that performance is a clear indicator that a company is achieving success, derived from the achievement of its business objectives.

This research seeks to determine the influence of e-marketing and innovation on business success, measured by performance, in micro-enterprises in the textile sector of Aguascalientes. Thus, this study formulates three hypotheses that are presented in Table 1.

Table1: Research Hypotheses

No	Hypothesis
H1	E-marketing has an influence on business success in micro-enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.
H2	Innovation has an influence on business success in microenterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.
H3	Innovation has a greater influence than e-marketing on business success in micro-enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.

Source: own development

2. Literature Review

E-marketing is defined as the use of information technology, internet, and applications to plan and execute marketing processes that define needs and demands: conception, distribution and pricing, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy objectives in dividual and organizational (Arifur and Khan, 2017).Digital media have transformed the ways in which people exchange information, today it is common to see that users share information with their network of contacts (Kasabov, 2016). In this context, we can affirm that e-marketing has surpassed the traditional one, since it increased efficiency and effectiveness, and transformed traditional marketing strategies (Bala and Verma, 2018). In addition, it allows to get the correct content to captive and potential customers, otherwise the growth of companies will be affected (Cooper, Newell, and Atkinson, 2019).

One of the greatest benefits of E-marketing is that the client does not suffer in the process, since they are always informed, receive help, and solve problems without having to move in real time (Sosa and Useche, 2017);in addition to helping to maintain brand visibility and increase loyalty (Liu, Perry, & Gadzinski, 2018).The above is achieved by using the different e-marketing tools, such as: websites, SEO (Search engine optimization), e-mail marketing & newsletters, virtual communities, banners, electronic commerce, application development, social networks, among others (Sosa and Useche, 2017; Noyola, 2016).

There are several benefits of e-marketing such as interactive communication, immediacy, increased feedback, increased communication, and interaction. The growth that e-marketing has had has been proportional to the number of users and the innovation of digital tools that support the strategy of organizations (Selman, 2017) and that are reflected in their performance, an example of this is the case of Europe, in 2018 electronic commerce moved 41,509 million euros in Spain, which is 32.4% higher than the 2017 figures (ONTSI, 2018).

On the other hand, innovation is defined as a new idea, a new form of action or a new object for an individual whose idea is to improve the final result to a certain extent and that when developed in products, processes or services better business results can be achieved (Räisänen and Tuovinen, 2020). Today's dynamic and highly competitive global markets have caused companies to reconsider their strategies in order to achieve better performance and greater competitiveness. Within these strategies, innovation stands out as a strategy that can generate greater business performance (Cuevas, 2016).

There are different classifications of the types of innovation, one of them is the one proposed by Carrasco, Gasperín and Curiel (2019):

- Innovation in the product, which consists of a good or service that is new or improved in its characteristics or use.
- Process innovation, which involves a new or improved process with significant changes in techniques, materials, or software.
- Marketing innovation that is the application of a new marketing method that involves significant changes in the design or packaging of a product, its positioning, its promotion, or its pricing.
- Organizational innovation, introduction of a new organizational method in the practices, the organization of the workplace or the external relations of the company.

An innovative company will obtain a differentiation from its competition which will bring greater profits for it since the competitive advantage obtained must be used to the maximum by the organization to improve its results and therefore its performance (Porter, 2015).

The performance of the organization, for some authors, indicates the level of importance in which the objectives, previously established in the planning of the organization, are achieved. To achieve these, a series of indicators

must be established in order to calculate the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization (Obando, Cuenc, and Rea, 2020).

Some other authors explain that organizational performance is the set of objectives to be achieved and that in order to evaluate them, companies establish indicators to measure the different business units such as financial resources, production costs, productivity, satisfaction of clients, market share, indebtedness, profitability and especially the work performance of each of the members of the organization (Ghermandi, 2018).

In addition to the above definitions and measures, we must remember that the culture that prevails in the markets is results-oriented; it does not allow errors and is based on the achievement of objectives using all the necessary tools to stand out from the competition (VivaceandFranco, 2012).

Among the tools to be used to improve the performance of companies is innovation, as mentioned above where it is established that an innovative company will obtain a differentiation from its competition, and this will bring greater profits (Porter, 2015). Other of these tools are e-marketing tools, such as having a corporate website and / or being present on social networks, which results in a higher performance of the company. In this sense, if they are looking for an increase in performance and be present in the markets, companies should bet on digital media. (Ruíz, Rienda, and Carey, 2020).

The textile sector is made up of companies dedicated to the manufacture and commercialization of textile fibers, garments, and related products, including the manufacture and distribution of footwear, resulting from the mixture of the textile and clothing industry (Mair, Druckman, & Jackson,2016). This sector is one of the most influential manufacturing industries in the world economy (WTO, 2018), but also poses serious social problems (OECD, 2014; and Stotz and Kane, 2015) environmental (Eryuruk, 2012).

In Mexico, the textile and clothing industry contributed 3.2% of the GDP of manufacturing industries and ranked 10th among the most important manufacturing economic activities in 2019. According to reports, the textile and clothing industry employed 640,000 people in 2018, with 208 thousand corresponding to the textile industry and 432 thousand to the clothing industry (INEGI, 2020).

At the global level, the textile sector has been less rugged in recent years, as a result of the elimination in 2005 of the Multifarious Agreement where limits or quotas were exposed on the number of textiles that could enter Canada, United States of America, and the European Union, as a consequence, countries such as China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, became the first beneficiaries, and the textile supply crisis developed for Italy, Spain, and Mexico. Asian countries exported large quantities to the United States, the European Union, and Japan (Escobar, 2019). Thus, today, China is the center of textile innovation, and its influence goes beyond low-cost production (low cost), which represents a paradigm shift compared to recent years (Trejo, 2019).

3. Methodology

The instrument used for this research is made up of four sections that include a total of 32 questions, of which 9 belong to section I, 4 to section II, 7 to section III and 12 to section IV. Sections II, III and IV correspond to the e-marketing, innovation, and performance constructs respectively, measured by means of a 5point Likert-type scale, taken from previously validated scales, based on the authors indicated in Table 2.

Table2: Questionnaire sections and scales.

Section	Scale	Author
I	Company's data	Does not apply
II	E-marketing	Yousaf, Sahar, Majid y Rafiq, (2017).
III	Innovation	Maldonado, Garza, Pinzón y Kumar, (2017).

IV	Performance	Maldonado, García, Martínez, Aguilera, González y Vivanco, (2013).

Source: Own development based on different authors.

To carry out this research, a quantitative approach was chosen, focusing on micro-enterprises in the textile sector of Aguascalientes. The sample obtained was defined by the sector to which it belongs and the size of the company, based on the number of employees and income. The national statistical directory of economic units (DENUE, 2018) was used with an original sample of 292 companies, with a confidence level of 95% and an error of 5%. The surveys were applied to owners or managers of the microenterprises of the textile sector of Aguascalientes through a personal interview.

Table 3: Sample data of micro enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes

Population	**635**
Sample	101
Place	Aguascalientes
Segment	Micro enterprises in the textile industry
Data collection method	Survey
Data	April 2019 to November 2019

Source: own development based on DENUE (2018).

4. Results

4.1 Data analysis and results

The statistical results derived from the analysis yielded the mean for each of the items of the three constructs, obtained from a 5-point Likert-type scale questionnaire. As it can be seen in table 4, all the results are above 2.5 and consequently are above the mean. Table 4 shows each of the means together with their standard deviation, which indicates how dispersed the results of the total companies analyzed are with respect to their average.

Table4: Mean and standard deviation for each of the items and average by construct.

Item	Mean	Deviation	Average
IN1	3.71	1.033	
IN2	3.48 3.65	1.083 1.024	
IN3	3.37	1.155	
IN4			3.62
IN5	3.55	1.109	
IN6	3.76	0.929	
IN7	3.83	0.917	
EM1	3.35	1.276	
EM2	3.35	1.284	3.22
EM3	3.24	1.328	
EM4	2.93	1.373	
RE1	4.27	0.859	

RE2	4.03	3.98	0.830	0.938	
RE3	4.10	3.99	0.975	0.975	
RE4	3.98		0.948		
RE5					
RE6					3.91
RE7	3.88		0.920		
RE8	3.75		1.014		
RE9	3.86		0.949		
RE10	3.95		0.953		
RE11	3.52		1.154		
RE12	3.60		1.123		

Source: Own development using SPSS

Table No 4 shows how the means of each of the items behave, highlighting that most do not exceed 4 points, so it was decided to add the average of the means obtained for each of the constructs. The average of each construct presented means lower than 4 points on a scale of 5, which is an outstanding figure, taking into account that, the higher the mean, the greater the inclination to innovation, e-marketing, and the performance of microenterprises in the textile sector of Aguascalientes.

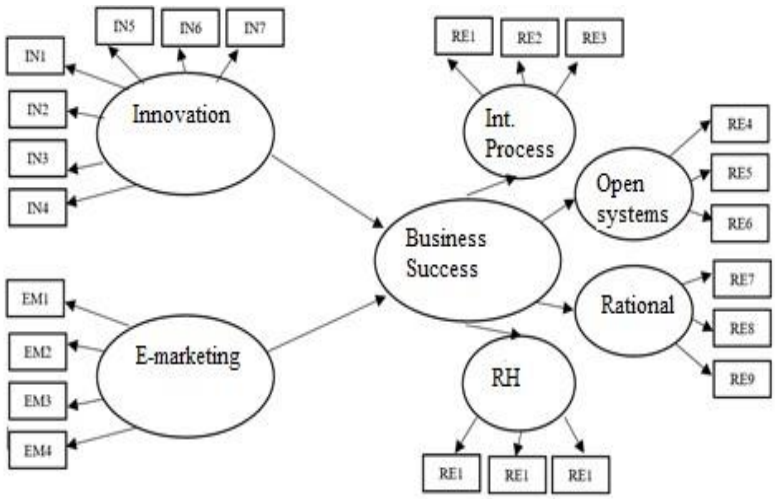

Figure 1: SEM

This research starts from a proposed structural model (Figure 1) in which we have the relationships of each of the constructs, as well as their dimensions until reaching their items. In such a way that it allows us to respond to the hypotheses raised once the structural equations have been carried out. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for each of the constructs in order to analyze the reliability and validity of the scales, using the maximum likelihood method with the EQS 6.1 software (Brown, 2006; Bentler, 2005; Byrne, 2006).

Tabla 5: Consistencia interna y validez convergente del modelo teórico.

Variable	Item	Factor load	T robust		Cronbach's α	C. R.	AVE
Product innovation	IN1	0.765	1.000		0.726	0.684	0.531
	IN2	0.676	6.107				
Process innovation	IN3	0.897	1.000		0.752	0.770	0.683
	IN4	0.677	7.468				
Management innovation	IN5	0.743	1.000	7.900			
	IN6	0.795	7.721		0.830	0.838	0.766
	IN7	0.847					
Emarketing	EM1	0.887	1.000		0.895	0.898	0.861
	EM2	0.891	13.483				
	EM3	0.857	13.593				
	EM4	0.673	7.513				
Internal Process performance	RE1	0.740	1.000		0.852	0.839	0.770
	RE2	0.828	6.138				
	RE3	0.823	6.411				
Open system performance	RE4	0.793	1.000	8.278	0.864	0.847	0.783
	RE5	0.831	6.084				
	RE6	0.794					
Rational performance	RE7	0.834	1.000		0.867	0.852	0.791
	RE8	0.833	9.351				
	RE9	0.765	6.390				
Human Resources performance	RE10	0.879	1.000		0.824	0.756	0.623
	RE11	0.636	6.921				
	RE12	0.610	5.865				
			X^2/df =1.79; p<0.000; NFI=0.852; CFI=0.871; RMSEA=0.089				

Source: Own development using EQS and SPSS

The results obtained were evaluated by means of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the Composite Reliability index (CR) and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) proposed by Bagozzi and Yi (1988), where values higher than 0.7, 0.7and0.5, respectively.

For the analysis of validity, it was performed through convergent validity where all items were significant, with factor loadings greater than 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and the average variance extracted (AVE) of each dimension of the constructs greater than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

4.2 Hypotheses Test

Table 6: Results of the hypotheses of the theoretical model of the influence of e-marketing and innovation on business success measured by performance in micro-enterprises in the textile sector.

Hypotheses	Structural relation	Standardized coefficient	T Robust
E-marketing has an influence on business success in micro-enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.	E-marketing →Performance	0.213 ***	2.680
Innovation has an influence on business success in microenterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.	Innovation →Performance	0.754 ***	5.974

Source: own development using EQS 6.1.

The results obtained through the structural equations were relevant since the influence of E-marketing and innovation on performance was positive and significant, which allows us to highlight that both constructs influence business success, measured by performance. In which, although an influence was found in both constructs on performance, it was not the same. Finding a higher beta in the influence of innovation on performance (0.754), compared to e-marketing that obtained a lower beta than the innovation construct (0.213), highlighting that both present a high level of significance.

Table 6: Hypotheses Test.

No	Hypotheses	
H1	E-marketing has an influence on business success in micro-enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.	Accepted
H2	Innovation has an influence on business success in microenterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.	Accepted
H3	Innovation has a greater influence than emarketing on business success in microenterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.	Accepted

Source: own development

5. Conclusions

The results of this research were relevant since they demonstrated that innovation and E-marketing are tools that help achieve the success of companies, being the case of micro-companies in the textile sector of Aguascalientes. A segment of companies with serious problems today, characterized by being managed in a traditional way, away from technology and without knowledge of strategies or tools that help them survive in the market (Mbugua and Mbugua, 2019).

When carrying out this research through a quantitative analysis, the evidence of the current situation of this segment of companies came out through the means obtained for each of the items. The innovation items had averages lower than four, which shows that these companies do not carry out high rates of innovation, when they are not necessarily talking about radical innovation, but with the alternative of making incremental innovations that help improve their processes, products, and management. In such a way that the average of the means of the innovation construct were less than four.

Regarding the E-marketing construct the means are less than four, similar to the case of innovation, highlighting that each of them obtained very high deviations, which means that there are companies in this sector with E-marketing rates well below the average obtained. This is a worrying finding, knowing that E-marketing is a powerful tool at a low cost (El-Gohary, 2012). Just like the cases of Innovation and E-marketing, the performance construct obtained similar results with respect to its means, being expected outcome for a segment of companies with problems nowadays.

However, the purpose of this research is not to demonstrate the behavior of the constructs in isolation through their means. The relevant results of this research were obtained from the structural equations applied to the proposed model, in order to verify the hypotheses raised in which they include two business strategies, which is the case of innovation and e-marketing, focused on achieving the business success for micro-enterprises in the textile sector in Aguascalientes.

The results obtained from the equations were apposite since it was demonstrated that both constructs (innovation and e-marketing) influence performance. The values of 0.213 for E-marketing and 0.754 for innovation are both highly significant, highlighting that innovation influences performance more than Emarketing does. Coinciding with Porter (2015), who concludes that innovation influences the performance of companies and on the other hand with Yousaf, Sahar, Majid and Rafiq (2017), who showed that the use of Emarketing within companies manages to increase their performance.

The three hypothesis raised in this research were verified, and each of them was accepted. Through this research, it was possible to unveil the current situation of the micro-enterprises of the textile sector in Aguascalientes regarding these three constructs, partly exposing the reason for the failure of this type of companies. Leaving on the other hand, the choice of two business strategies that influence to keep these companies from closing and lead them to business success.

Currently, entrepreneurs have great opportunities at hand through technology. They can look for new products, processes, or ways of managing their businesses, as well as low-cost and powerful tools, such as Emarketing, that will contribute positively to the performance of their companies. This research serves as evidence for companies and the government to formulate strategies and public policies that help companies achieve business success through these two simple and low-cost strategies, innovation, and e-marketing.

This research is limited as the questionnaires were answered by the businessmen based on their point of view, the geographical area where it was applied (Aguascalientes) and that only legally established organizations were included. Therefore, it is suggested for future research to consider qualitative analysis, applying the model to other sectors, as well as to other geographical areas.

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