

# Improving the status of social factors affecting health: a model for small and medium-sized enterprises to enter regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach

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## Abstract

**Background:** Many factors are effective in business development and experts have emphasized marketing and consider it one of the most important factors determining business survival. This study aimed to present a model of how small and medium companies enter regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach.

**Methods:** This study was a mixed research type. In the qualitative part of this study, market entry strategies were investigated and identified using the method of literature review and existing texts. To design the questionnaire, the opinions of 15 business management experts were used by the snowball method to obtain suitable samples for the study, and then the model was approved by the experts using the meta-heuristic method.

**Results:** 100 people were present for the implementation of this study, 6.7% of the participants in the study had less than 10 years of work experience and 40% between 16 and 20 years, and 20% had more than 20 years of service. The proposed conceptual model of the research, which is obtained from the met heuristic process, shows that the initial conceptual model of the research consists of 4 categories of dimensions (entrepreneur orientation, market orientation, customer orientation, and innovation orientation) and 48 concepts and 182 codes (indicators).

**Conclusion:** Given the importance of socioeconomic factors on health outcomes, businesses should consider the market distribution network, knowledge infrastructure, business capability, product innovation, the risk of participation, competitors, market development, and strategies.

**Keywords:** Health; Iran; Social Factors; Social Marketing.

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## Introduction

There are several methods for entering abroad markets and globalization in the world economy, and the selection of the appropriate method leads to success in the presence in the destination market (1). In parallel with the phenomenon of globalization and the change of competition, firms operating in developing countries have entered the

market significantly and are expanding in the area of new products. Each country plays an effective role in the global economy and expanding its share of world trade (2).

One of the most important decisions of firms for globalization is the selection of target markets and the method of entering

them, which is the most important criterion for the success of activity abroad (3). A lack of market orientation and ability, according to researchers, causes small businesses to perform worse and have a larger chance of failing (4). Given the characteristics of small enterprises that have fewer financial and human resources, less formal structure, and a simple and temporary decision-making process, a different marketing method other than the traditional type should be used as entrepreneurial marketing in them (5).

But there is growing proof that a variety of health outcomes are fundamentally influenced by socioeconomic factors, including money, wealth, and education (6). Even though the impacts of extreme poverty on health are rarely contested, not everyone agrees on how money and education across the socioeconomic spectrum affect health. Some have claimed that correlations between income and health or education and health show reverse causation (i.e., illness causing income loss and/or worse educational success) (7). A growing body of research suggests that numerous social factors, including socioeconomic determinants, and a variety of health outcomes are causally linked, both directly and through more complicated pathways frequently incorporating biopsychosocial processes (8).

Since small businesses and huge multinational corporations have different ownership structures, management styles, and resource availability, entrepreneurial marketing is a result of these differences. Answering the question of how small corporations enter global markets differs from corporate corporations and whether firm size, type of ownership, field of activity, and prior experience with corporate entry methods are important because previous studies have concentrated on large corporations, the purpose of the current study was to develop a framework for small and medium-sized businesses to use when entering regional markets using

an entrepreneurial marketing strategy, regardless of whether strategic goals and management techniques had an impact on the entrance method or not.

## **Methods**

A comprehensive combination of models presented in this field was obtained using the meta-heuristic method, which was based on their interpretation and translation because the concept of entrepreneurial marketing is a multidimensional and broad concept (9). Thus, since this study aimed to design a comprehensive model in which the method of entry of small and medium firms into regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach, this research method has been used. Since the present study sought to design a comprehensive model in which the method of entry of small and medium-sized enterprises to regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach was considered, this method was used in this study. The aim of this process was that the weaknesses of different models were covered with the strengths of other models and the shortcomings were repaired in the new model and a model that was appropriate to the conditions and requirements of small and medium-sized enterprises was designed. The present study was fundamental research in terms of aim since it designed and constructed a new model for entrepreneurial marketing and provides market entry conditions and methods for small and medium-sized firms.

### *Met heuristic Method*

An analysis of data and conclusions drawn from other qualitative investigations on the same subject is known as a meta-heuristic. As a result, qualitative investigations were used to choose the sample for the met heuristic, and as a result, their relevance to the research topics is established. The findings combine to provide an interpretive explanation (10). Instead of offering a thorough overview of the findings, the meta-heuristic concentrates on qualitative

investigations that may not necessarily cover broad theoretical grounds and creates an interpretive combination of the data (11). To achieve this goal, the Sandelowski & Barros, seven-step method (12) was used. Sandelowski & Barros, seven-step steps are shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The Sandelowski & Barros seven-step met heuristic method

*Steps and methods of working in met heuristic:* The seven-step Sandelowski & Barros approach was applied in the current study to analyze the data that was taken from the research literature.

#### Step 1: Develop the research question

The steps performed in this study to formulate the research question were as follows:

1) What: The first step in creating a research question is to concentrate on the contents of the study. The goal of this study was to recognize, classify, and group the characteristics and elements of small and medium-sized businesses that use

entrepreneurial marketing strategies to enter local markets.

2) Who: The study population was determined in order to provide an answer to this query. All accessible studies in the field of entrepreneurial marketing that were obtained from the databases made up the statistical population for this study. The databases of several journals, conferences, and search engines (to download English and Persian articles) were analyzed for this study, and the search sources and the frequency of articles discovered in each of the sources were shown separately.

3) When: This question specifies the time frame of the resources found from the previous steps. In answer to this question, the time frame of the sources found from the previous step is determined and the English articles reviewed in this study are from 2002 to 2019 and the English articles reviewed in this study were articles from 2007 to 2019. In this study, Persian articles before 2002 were not considered so much.

4) How: It refers to the method used to study the found sources. In the met heuristic of the text of previous studies, they considered as data (secondary data). Therefore, in this study, the content analysis method was used. According to the objectives of the study, the researcher identified suitable articles, and based on the desired parameters, the appropriate model for the entry of small and medium enterprises into the regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach to improve the status of social factors affecting health was examined and evaluated.

#### Step 2: Systematically review the texts

In the second step of the met heuristic, various databases and search engines were searched and several keywords were used to search for articles. In this step, the main keywords (in English and Persian) related to the subject were selected to systematically search for articles published in various journals. In this study, various

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for articles in the second step

Criteria	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Research of studies	English and Persian studies	Non-English and non-Persian studies
Time of English studies	Studies published from 2002 to 2019	Studies before 2002
Time of Persian studies	Studies published from 2007 to 2019	Studies before 2007
Validity of studies	Articles published in reputable journals and databases	Personal opinions, personal databases
Subject of study	Dimensions, definitions, models, and factors affecting entrepreneurial marketing	Other cases

databases, journals, and search engines were examined to receive English and Persian articles and books. In this systematic study, various keywords were used for the search was consisted of Entrepreneurial marketing, International Marketing, Market entry strategies, and Market-driven and Entrepreneurial perspectives. To extract appropriate articles from the mentioned sources using specific keywords, some criteria were considered. In this study, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were determined according to Table 1. Also, at the beginning of the search, to prevent receiving irrelevant articles in terms of title, the researcher carefully studied the titles of Persian and English articles in the databases to prevent the entry of many unrelated articles for the next step.

As a result of searching and reviewing the mentioned sources, using the considered keywords and considering the inclusion criteria, a total of 215 sources (113 English sources and 102 Persian sources), consisted of English sources (Journal of Business Research, Industrial Marketing Management, Australasian Marketing Journal, Review of Contemporary Business Research) and Persian sources(Quarterly Journal of Growth and Technology, The Second New International Conference on Management, Economics, and Humanities, Technology Development Management Quarterly Journal, Biannual Scientific-Research Quarterly Journals of Modern Marketing Research, Business Management Vision, New Research in Decision Making, Scientific-Extension Quarterly Journal of Human Resources Studies, Iranian Journal of Management

Sciences, Entrepreneurship Development, Journal of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture)

The third step was to search and select the appropriate articles

In the search process, the researcher considered various parameters such as the title, abstract, content, and details of the article (author's name, year, etc.) and removed articles that did not fit the question and aim of the research. Figure 2 summarizes the process.

Also, the inclusion and exclusion criteria included the language of the research, study period, study conditions, study population, and type of study.

Studies' quality is frequently evaluated using the Critical Assessment Skills Program (CASP) tool. The CASP technique is a tool for evaluating the caliber of preliminary qualitative research studies and the qualitative research approach. This tool is one of the methods for measuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research especially used for the met heuristic research method.

Using the CASP method with 10 qualitative conditions, each article was evaluated qualitatively. A score of 1 to 5 was considered for each item. Articles with a collective score of 25 and above were confirmed qualitatively, and the rest of the articles were excluded. The conditions considered for the CASP method were:

Appropriateness of the goals of the reviewed articles with the research goals

Up-to-date research of the reviewed article

The plan presented in the reviewed article

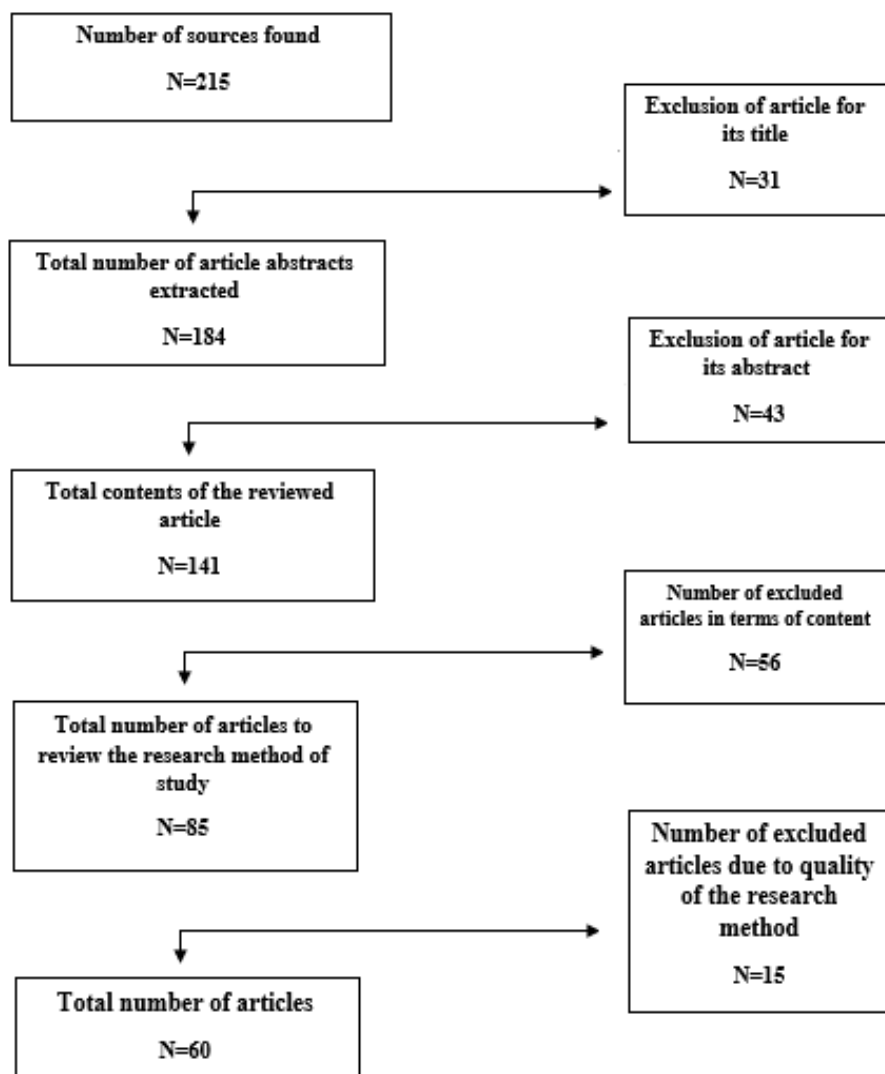


Figure 2. Results of searching and selection of articles

*Method and quality of data collection:*

A scoring system can be designed based on the CASP 50-point scale. The simplest way is to delete any article that has a score below 25. The rubric has identified three categories: poor (0 to 10), moderate (11 to 20), good (21 to 30), very good (31 to 40), and excellent (40 to 50), as shown in Figure 3.

Fourth step: extracting the results

The researcher constantly read the chosen and finalized articles multiple times during the meta-heuristic technique in order to acquire findings with distinct content where

the original investigations were conducted. 34 components were found in the current

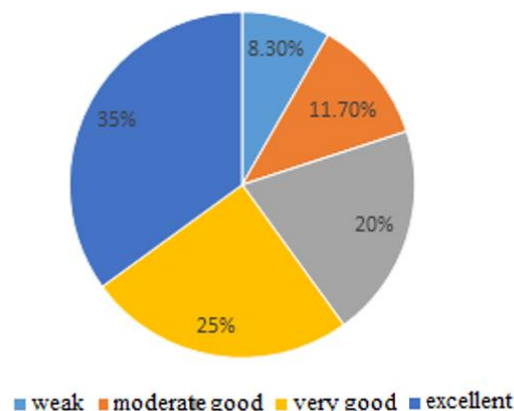


Figure 3. The ratio of final articles in terms of ten indicators

study, and the researcher provided them in a table based on the references, the author's name, the publication year, and the article. The results are presented separately for Persian and English references.

#### **Step 5: Analyzing and integrating qualitative findings**

The meta-heuristic's objective is to produce an original and comprehensive interpretation of the results. This approach is used to make concepts and models clearer, and it contributes to the development of operational models and widely accepted theories as well as knowledge that has already been refined. In the present study, the codes were extracted from the previous step and the matrix form of scales was formed to categorize the concepts.

#### **Results**

The results of the research are presented as follows:

According to the information in Table 2, 9 people, equal to 60% of all respondents, were men, and 6 people, equal to 40%, were women. The highest frequency was related to the age group of 40 years to 45 years with the number of 6 people, 40%, and 6 people. The equivalent of 40% of the total respondents had a bachelor's degree, 1 equal to 6.7% had a postgraduate degree, 5 equal to 33.3% had a master's degree, and 3 equal to 20% had a doctorate. 6.7% of the respondents had a service experience of fewer than 10 years, 33.3% between 10 and 15 years, 0.40% between 16 and 20 years, and 20% had more than 20 years of service.

Accordingly, an interpretation was achieved beyond a study that included all aspects. As a result, the findings of this step were the basis for the formation of the research model, in which by combining all the categories, a total of 182 final codes were identified, as shown in Tables 3,4,5, and 6.

#### **Step 6: Quality control**

In this step, the researcher returned to the previous steps to ensure that they are done correctly to ensure the quality of his study. Researchers sought to follow the processes during this research by offering concise, valid, and supported explanations and descriptions. In the third step, extraneous texts were eliminated using a precise and organized process. Additionally, to locate relevant articles and texts, both computerized and manual search techniques were used. The Kappa index was also used to maintain the quality of the research. The method of calculating this index can be seen in the reliability part of the model.

#### **Validity and reliability of measurement tools**

After completing the met heuristic method steps, the designed model was presented to seven members of the marketing management elite in focus group meetings. In these meetings, all three levels of the model were examined and a change in the validity of the current model was achieved through content validity, which was performed from two aspects. The first factor contributed to the model's validity by utilizing elements and factors from earlier models that had been presented. The fact that the model hasn't changed suggests that the research model is valid. The kappa index was used to assess the model's reliability because the criteria of earlier models were viewed as code during the model design process. By taking into account the semantic similarities between the codes, they were integrated, and concepts (themes) were developed. As a result, someone else (among the marketing elites) classified the codes into concepts without understanding how to combine the codes and concepts that the researcher had developed. The concepts presented by the researcher were compared with the concepts presented by this person. Finally, according to the number of similar concepts created and different concepts created, the kappa index was calculated. As seen in

Table 6, the researcher created 48 concepts, and the other person created 51 concepts, of which 43 were common.

$$\text{Observed agreements } E = \frac{A+D}{N} = \frac{43+0}{56} = 0.77$$

As shown below, the kappa index value was calculated to be 0.767, which is at the level of valid agreement according to Table 6.

$$F = \frac{A+B}{N} * \frac{A+C}{N} * \frac{C+D}{N} * \frac{B+D}{N} = \frac{43+8}{56} * \frac{43+5}{56} * \frac{5+0}{56} * \frac{8+0}{56} = 0.01$$

$$K = \frac{E-F}{1-F} = \frac{0.77-0.01}{1-0.01} = 0.767$$

Based on the proposed conceptual model of the research, which is obtained from the met heuristic process, shows that the initial conceptual model of the research consists of 4 categories of dimensions (entrepreneur orientation, market orientation, customer orientation, and innovation orientation) and 48 concepts and 182 codes (indicators). In the present study, the met heuristic exploratory method was used for modeling. By the combination of the mentioned framework and theories, the proposed conceptual model of the research is presented schematically as shown in Figure 2.

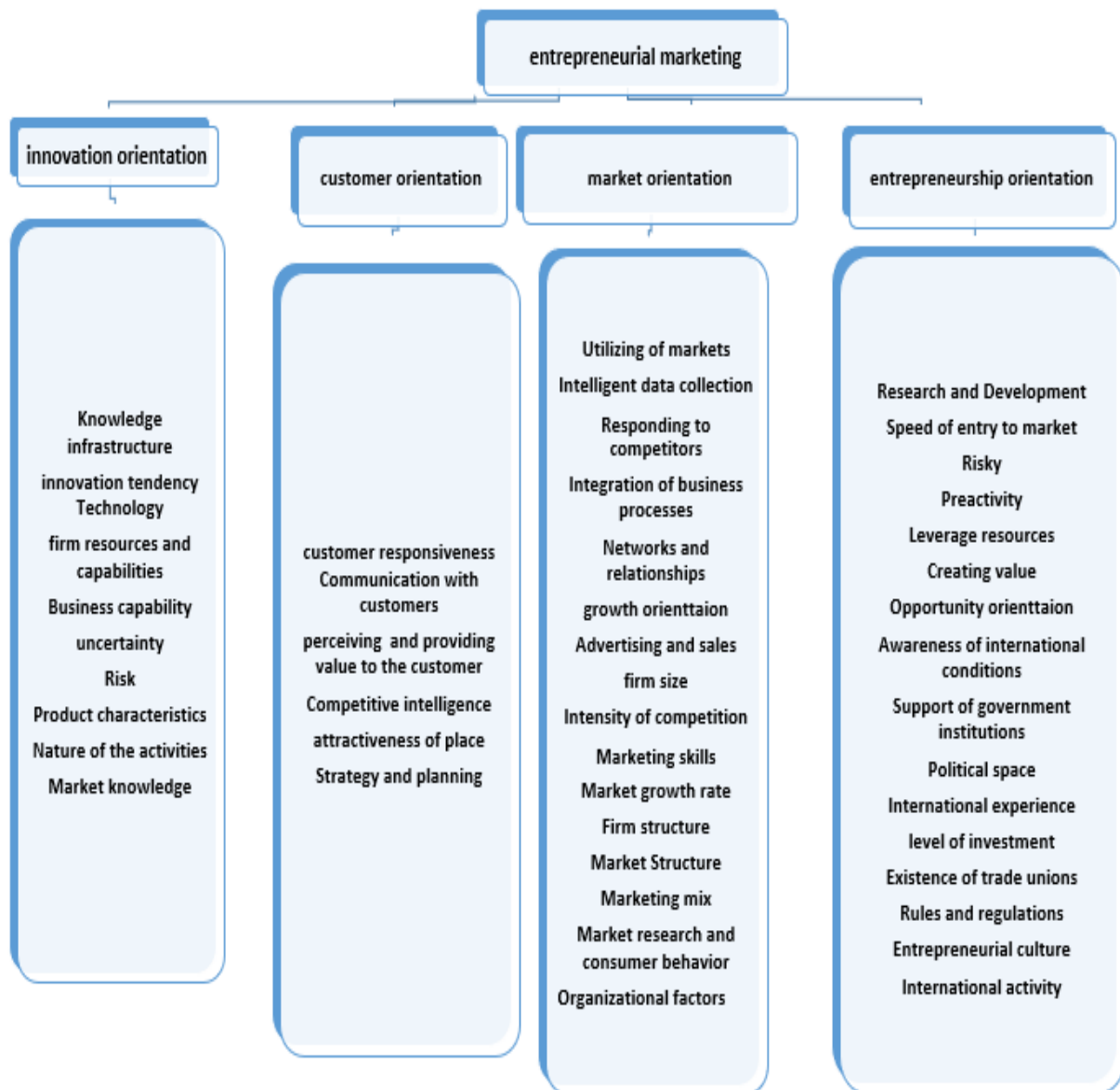


Figure 2. The model extracted from the met heuristic method

Table 2. Sources and frequency of extracted categories, concepts, and codes of Entrepreneurship orientation

Concepts	Article title	Code
- Research and development - Speed of entry to market	utilizing the Delphi technique and meta-heuristics to create an entrepreneurial marketing model	investment in research - technological leadership competitive-participatory
-Risk-taking -Proactivity -Leverage resources -Value creation - Opportunity orientation	Business recovery following a disaster: An entrepreneurial marketing viewpoint. dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing Making entrepreneurial marketing decisions in start-up businesses that are rapidly going global and going local. construction of a scale for entrepreneurial marketing Entrepreneurial Marketing's Impact on Business Performance construction of a scale for entrepreneurial marketing International high-tech business-to-business new enterprises entrepreneurial marketing:	-risk-taking -Performance for incremental - Acting reactively -Delegating tasks to small groups -Personalizing resources for optimal use -Excellently providing services pricing based on the value -Identifying opportunities
Awareness of international conditions	Iranian food industry entrepreneurs' use of international entrepreneurial marketing	Knowledge related to the conditions of activity in the international arena. Awareness of the rules of the game
-Support of government institutions -Political space - Entrepreneurial culture	Influential factors for SME internationalization: Evidence from Malaysia The model of selecting the operational strategy in the international market for entrepreneurial businesses Operational strategy selection model in the international market for entrepreneurial businesses	-Transportation infrastructure, -Trade balance -International credit -Political relationships Strategic - Incentive rules - Culture of creativity
International experience	Dynamic tensions in strategic entrepreneurship: Converging (diverging) impacts of networks and expertise on market entry timing and entrant performance.	Previous International experience in market Experiences in domestic markets
Level of investment	Evaluating and analyzing strategies for entering food markets in foreign markets Greenfield	Size (volume) of firm investment
Existence of trade unions	Investigating the classification and selection of strategies for entering international markets Evaluating and analyzing strategies for entering food markets in foreign markets	-Participating in business events -Dispatching and investment teams
Rules and regulations	determining and ranking the criteria that influence the choice of techniques for entering global markets What is genuinely known about the external antecedents of entry mode choice after decades of research on market entry modes	Administrative and political rules and regulations Foreign trade and investment rule The level of bureaucracy Investment incentives
International activity	Impact of country- and firm-specific factors on the hotel industry's foreign market entry strategy Evaluation and study of food items' marketing approaches abroad	-Willingness to develop the market -Creating a safe sales margin. International brand registration, partnership attending international exhibitions



Table 3. Sources and frequency of extracted categories, concepts, and codes of Market orientation

Concepts	Article title	Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Utilizing the markets</li> <li>- Intelligent data collection</li> <li>- Integration of business processes</li> <li>- Networks and relationships</li> <li>- Growth orientation</li> </ul>	A case study of small and medium-sized businesses in western Iran's economy in the design of an entrepreneurial marketing model combining metaheuristics and the Delphi method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Strategy for success</li> <li>- Planning to reduce steps</li> <li>- Activities and Flexibility</li> <li>- Personalization approach</li> <li>-Collecting environmental information</li> <li>- New marketing strategy</li> <li>- Reaction to new competitor products</li> <li>- Software innovation</li> <li>- Differentiation strategy with the presentation of high-quality product</li> <li>- Competitive advantage based on perceiving customer needs</li> <li>- Community of research and development, marketing</li> <li>- Project Management-Marketing</li> <li>-Increasing sales in the long term</li> <li>- Capacity building for networking</li> <li>- Interfirm networks</li> <li>-Decision-making in the market</li> <li>- Processes related to customer relationship management and social networks</li> </ul>
Advertising and sales	Modeling the impact of entrepreneurial marketing on customer-oriented equity in the dairy food industry; with a focus on Kale brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The focus of the organization on advertising and sales activities - innovative promotion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Firm size</li> <li>- Intensity of competition</li> <li>- Marketing skill</li> </ul>	Evaluation and analysis of food products entry strategies to foreign markets Foreign market entry mode in the hotel industry: the impact of country- and firm specific factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number of employees and shifts</li> <li>- Competitors' reaction and structure of the industry in the future</li> <li>- The firm's success in using advertising to grow sales</li> </ul>
Market growth rate	What is known about external antecedents of entrance mode choice after decades of research on market entry modes	Existence of positive network effects, future changes in technology, market dispersion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Firm structure</li> <li>- Market Structure</li> </ul>	Tensions in strategic entrepreneurship: effects of networks and experience that are converging or diverging on the timing and performance of entrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Size, organizational structure, diversity of activities</li> <li>- Complete competition structure; monopoly competition structure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Marketing mix</li> <li>- Market research and consumer behavior</li> <li>- Organizational factors</li> </ul>	Designing an international entrepreneurial marketing model in Iranian industrial enterprises; mixed approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-New product development</li> <li>-Efforts to promote the brand</li> <li>-Development of technical capabilities</li> <li>- Utilizing marketing experts</li> <li>- Specialized activities in marketing, surveying in specialized exhibitions</li> <li>- Staff training, informal structure</li> <li>- creation of sales unit, recruitment, paying attention to the customer</li> </ul>

Table 4. Sources and frequency of extracted categories, concepts and codes of Customer orientation

Concepts	Article title	Code
Customer responsiveness - Customer relationship - Perceiving and providing value to the customer	A case study of small and medium-sized businesses in western Iran was used to create an entrepreneurial marketing model employing meta-heuristics and the Delphi technique.	-Responding to customer opinion and behavior -Responding quickly to changing preferences - Mechanisms for collecting formal and informal feedback - Successful delivery of products - Marketing Based on personal records - trust and acceptability - Customer satisfaction - Customer knowledge often based on market interaction
Competitive intelligence	Influential factors for SME internationalization: Evidence from Malaysia	-Ability to provide timely -measured reactions to market conditions and competitors' actions
Place attractiveness	Decades of research on market entry modes: what we really know about external antecedents of entry mode choice	-Development of target -Geographical distance of Iran from the target country -Convenience of foreign investment in the destination country
Strategy and planning	Designing an international entrepreneurial marketing model in Iranian industrial enterprises; mixed approach	-Cooperation with large and sometimes government institutions

**Discussion**

According to the results of the current study, entrepreneurial marketing is a critical tactic for small and medium-sized businesses in dynamic environments that depend on creativity, risk-taking, resource leveraging, leadership, value creation, customer orientation, and opportunity identification. Overall, it can be said that entrepreneurial marketing is essential to the success of small and medium-sized businesses, particularly in developing nations where these businesses must employ entrepreneurial marketing techniques to attain outstanding performance. Uncertainty also requires a wide range of entrepreneurial marketing activities such as innovative, preventive, risk-taking, opportunity-oriented activities, market acceleration, utilizing of the market, competitor responsiveness, and communication to provide value for customers, entrepreneurs, marketers, partners, and the community (13). Therefore, the present study provides an almost long list of four perspectives (entrepreneurship orientation, market

orientation, customer orientation. and innovation orientation). However, most researchers have referred to some of the concepts. For example, Nora Sadiku et al., (14), Crick James et al., (15), and Alqahtani & Uslay (16), have referred to the concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship, and Rezvani et al., (17), and Seyedjavadin et al., (18) have referred to the concepts of market and customer orientation.

Also, this study identified a set of other factors such as entrepreneurial culture, awareness, and knowledge of international conditions and market research and consumer behavior, entrepreneurial mentality, and attitude that have led to the formation of entrepreneurial marketing, while these factors have not been addressed simultaneously in previous studies. Also, utilizing entrepreneurial marketing has many implications such as market penetration, competitive advantage, profitability, value creation, differentiation, customer loyalty, etc. Small and medium-sized businesses can gain a lot from entrepreneurial marketing, including more customers, better use of the firm's superior

5. Sources and frequency of extracted categories, concepts, and codes of Innovation orientation		
Concepts	Article title	Code
Knowledge infrastructure	Designing an entrepreneurial marketing model using met heuristic and Delphi methods	Information technology Innovation trends and methods - Collection and dissemination of information
Innovation tendency	Post-disaster business recovery: An entrepreneurial marketing perspective. Entrepreneurial marketing dimensions and SMEs performance Entrepreneurial marketing decision-making in rapidly internationalizing and de-internationalizing start-up firms. Developing a scale for entrepreneurial marketing:	Processes of preserving and shaping the culture of the organization to stimulate and maintain creativity and innovation
Technology Firm resources and capabilities	Operational strategy selection model in the international market for entrepreneurial businesses Influential factors for SME internationalization: Evidence from Malaysia	Technology complexity, Technology diversity, Technology life cycle, Nature of technology, - provide the required information - ability to design and develop the new product - ability to design and develop site and factory
Business capability	Designing an international entrepreneurial marketing model in Iranian industrial enterprises; mixed approach	Tangible and intangible sources of business
Uncertainty	Evaluation and analysis of food products entry strategies to foreign markets Foreign market entry mode in the hotel industry: the impact of the country- and firm-specific factors	-The political stability of the target country --Fluctuations in economic -Cultural differences between Iran and the destination country
Risk	Post-disaster business recovery: An entrepreneurial marketing perspective. Entrepreneurial marketing dimensions and SMEs performance Entrepreneurial marketing decision-making in rapidly internationalizing and de-internationalizing start-up firms. Developing a scale for entrepreneurial marketing:	Political risk, investment risk, country risk
Product characteristics The nature of activities	Factors that Influence Entry Mode Choice in Foreign Markets,	-The brand gains more trust than competitors, stability in quality -Goods-based or service-based product, -Knowledge-based or capital-based product
Market knowledge	Operational strategy selection model in the international market for entrepreneurial businesses An institution-based view of international business strategy: A focus on emerging economies Influential factors for SME internationalization: Evidence from Malaysia	General market knowledge founders' entrepreneurial

Table 6. Status of transforming codes into concepts by the researcher and another person

Row	Researcher opinion			sum
	Yes	No		
Opinion of another person	Yes	A=43	B=8	51
	No	C=5	D=0	5
	Sum	48	8	N=56

knowledge, brand differentiation, superior customer service, increased competitive advantage, improved profitability, and higher levels of customer loyalty (19). Various other pieces of data have demonstrated how socioeconomic factors including money, education, and work significantly influence health-related behaviors (20).

Strong correlations between social, including socioeconomic, factors and a wide range of health outcomes in a variety of contexts and groups have been consistently and again demonstrated, and the biological plausibility of the impact of social factors on health has been established. It is not unusual to find exceptional instances of health indicators, environments, and subgroups in which improved health is not always associated with increased social advantage. There may be a point at which having a higher level of a certain social factor, like income, no longer results in better health. There will inevitably be exceptions because the impacts of any one element depend on the existence of a myriad of other factors, including social, economic, psychological, environmental, genetic, and epigenetic ones. It is quite amazing that there are so few exceptions to the general trend given the lengthy, intricate causal chains connecting social factors—especially those upstream ones like money and education—to health, with potential for innumerable interactions at each step (20).

According to current research, there are strategies to work together to help socially disadvantaged populations' health outcomes (21).

Other results of this study were related to the results of the correlation driving force matrix. In this matrix, the factors affecting the strategies of small and medium firms' entry to regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach are classified into two levels according to the driving force of each factor on other factors and the degree of dependence of each factor

on the factor. The innovation orientation factor showed the highest driving force and the market orientation showed the highest dependence. The current model is a guiding model for small and medium-sized enterprises to enter regional markets so it shows the strategies of small and medium-sized enterprises' entry to regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach. Therefore, this study sought to design a model in which the effective first step to entering regional markets has been identified.

According to the results and model extracted, it can be concluded that managers with an understanding of global markets and strategies to enter these markets can use the benefits of global markets in line with their firm strategies to increase profitability in these markets and increase their products in line with the needs of the global market. Presence in the international market is inherently different from the business in domestic markets. This difference changes the process of selecting the desired paths due to the inclusion of different parameters relative to the domestic business environment. Some researchers have introduced a set of variables to explain the factors influencing the international ways of doing business. However, it seems that selecting several ways to enter global markets without considering the dynamics between them is due to the oversimplification of strategic business issues. Given this issue, the present study seeks to provide a model for the entry of small and medium-sized enterprises to regional markets with an entrepreneurial marketing approach.

### ***Recommendations***

The following cases are also recommended for future studies, the application of each of the entrepreneurial marketing concepts depends on the conditions (normal and turbulent) and the life chain of the firm. It is recommended to use innovation and entrepreneurship perspectives at the beginning of the activity of small and

medium-sized enterprises, market orientation in the growth stage, and customer orientation in the maturity stage. It is also recommended for future researchers to examine the improvisational behavior of entrepreneurs and new investment performance as ways to enter international markets.

Most entrepreneurial marketing studies have been conducted in the physical environment and few of them have paid attention to the online environment. It is recommended that future researchers provide a framework for online entrepreneurial marketing, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises by considering concepts such as digital ecosystems, digital innovation, database management, social networks, and the interpretation of digital behaviors.

Deciding on entrepreneurial marketing in international markets for start-ups can also be another research topic for future researchers.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the present study, the factors related to innovation orientation are the basis of the model. It means that firms can enter regional markets with the knowledge of the market and the capabilities of the business, the infrastructure of innovation in its products, and accepting risk regarding the characteristics of their products. The firms can provide appropriate strategies and plan to enter the market by cooperating with large and sometimes government institutions, creating a distribution network, continuously tracking competitors in the market, market development, and flexibility in sales. Another factor that strongly affects the entry strategies of global markets is entrepreneurship. Using its resource leverage, which is one of the core entrepreneurial sub-criteria, the firm can share sources for maximum use, use creative methods to do work, delegate tasks to small groups, outsourcing activities, and create a network of inimitable

competencies, personalize sources for optimal use to enter global markets. Firm resources and capabilities are other factors affecting the innovation orientation of the firm. By providing the required information, specific resources, and assets of specific knowledge and technology, the ability to design and develop a new product, and the ability to design and develop the site and factory, the firm can provide the conditions for entry into global markets. Given the importance of the impact of socio-economic factors on health outcomes, firms should consider the distribution network in terms of market knowledge infrastructure, business capability, product innovation, risk-taking for participation, competitors, market development, sales flexibility, resource sharing, creative approach to tasks and outsourcing, outsourcing, networking of unique competencies, resource personalization, information delivery, knowledge resources, and specific technology and design new products for economic prosperity and consequently have commercial and health consequences. It is concluded that this model tries to provide a proper structure and division of concepts by using met heuristic and interpretive structural modeling, which can be a basis for future studies.

### **Author's contribution**

Tahereh Nesari and Farshid Namamian developed the study concept and design. Seyed Reza Hassani acquired the data. Afshin Baghfalaki and Tahereh Nesari analyzed and interpreted the data, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the intellectual content, manuscript editing and read and approved the final manuscript.

### **Informed consent**

Questionnaires were filled with the participants' satisfaction and written consent was obtained from the participants in this study.

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### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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