

Export entrepreneurship and green product uniqueness orientation on export performance of Indonesian small and medium enterprises

I Ketut Santra^{a*}, Kardison Lumban Batu^b and Ferdinandus Sampe^c

^aPoliteknik Negeri Bali, Jl. Kampus Bukit Jimbaran, Kuta Selatan, Badung, Bali 80364, Indonesia

^bPoliteknik Negeri Pontianak, Pontianak, Kalimantan Barat 78124, Indonesia

^cUniversitas Atma Jaya Makasar, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to explore the drivers of green export performance by considering case studies in Indonesian small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Conceptually, the uniqueness of green products and export entrepreneurship is proposed as an antecedent of green export performance. The ability to exploit the capacity of green products is used as an antecedent for the uniqueness of green products, while competitive capacity and market explorative capacity are considered as an antecedent of export entrepreneurship. 383 exporters in Indonesia are involved in this research. Using Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS statistical software, findings show that the capacity of exploitative green products and the capacity of green product exploitation had a significant impact on the uniqueness of green products. The competitive capacity and explorative capacity of market distance have positive significant effects on export entrepreneurship. Moreover, the uniqueness of green products has a significant positive effect on export entrepreneurship and on green export performance. This finding indicates the importance of exploiting green products to improve export performance by SMEs in Indonesia.

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1. Introduction

The study of efforts to define export entrepreneurship which includes speed, degree, and scope, and attempts to explore determinants of export entrepreneurship and its consequences have long been adopted through a resource-based view and contingency approach (Navarro-García, 2015). This is because entrepreneurship is considered the backbone of any country's economic growth and can be fostered by instilling entrepreneurial skills (Prakash et al., 2015), and is a practice that is always important for economic development (Robinson & Shumar, 2014). The process of a country's economic growth is strongly influenced by entrepreneurship and export growth through development and innovation. Entrepreneurship's contribution to economic growth is the creation and transfer of knowledge, competitiveness and diversity (Hessels, 2007). The findings suggest that exports greatly influence the social welfare of national currency reserves, and entrepreneurship contributes to enlarging industry and domestic employment (Hessels & van Stel, 2011). In addition to factors related to resource use, other studies reveal that entrepreneurship has a strong correlation with the type of capital and economic growth (Urbano & Aparicio, 2015; Santra et al., 2019). Entrepreneurs are one of the determinants of value creation in the business chain. The value of innovation is even considered an important factor in the global economy and plays an important role in overcoming recessions (Huang & Ribeiro-Soriano, 2014). The international corporate entrepreneurial orientation related to exploration and exploitation of new product lines and new geographic markets motivates entrepreneurs to create, develop and maintain social entrepreneurship projects and also to explore the difficulties and expectations faced by social entrepreneurs (Bragaa et al.,

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +62361701981

E-mail address: iksantna.pnb@gmail.com (I K. Santra)

2014). Some literature illustrates that there are two groups of determinants of export entrepreneurship. These determinants must be treated in harmony with export decision makers and managers. Among the external factors that influence export entrepreneurship, the contingency approach relates to the organizational environment, both domestic and foreign markets or even industries where exports exist (Aqmala et al., 2018). In this study, internal factors contain manager's attitude towards exports as reflected in export commitments. With RBV, the study selects the resource structure, export department and learning resources and international experience as internal factors of the organization. For the contingency approach, the study uses two external factors. First, the destination country - market distance, and second, the intensity of industrial factors - competition. In addition, with increasingly tight access to foreign markets, and high environmental standards that must be met in various European countries and the United States, most industries and SMEs from various developing countries are now more focused on the creation of environmentally oriented export products or green products. Such products, besides being more easily accepted in the international market, also require a technological condition and development that enables SMEs to be able to achieve the desired standards. However, making green products will consume significant amount of costs and be risky for SMEs with relatively small capital. In addition, the creation of export-oriented green products also requires knowledge, exploration capabilities and broad access to international markets, where most SMEs will calculate the market distance for export purposes. In many contexts, increasing green export performance also requires driving factors for social and ecological sustainability (Pacheco et al., 2010). There are three groups of factors that influence entrepreneurship and employers' perceptions of opportunities which are social, cultural and economic variables (Castaño et al., 2015). The success of opening markets abroad will usually be followed by the growth of domestic production that produces goods demanded by the market. Therefore, this study aims to offer contributions in defining the export entrepreneurial concept and dimensions (speed, degree and scope). Second, the study presents an empirical analysis of determinants of entrepreneurial entrepreneurship with the application of RBV and contingency approaches. The study has three main contributions. First, defining export entrepreneurship which explicitly uses indicators of speed, degree and scope. Second, the study refers to the RBV by noting that internal factors, personal-managerial export commitments and company performance and structural impacts on the level of entrepreneurial exports. With the adoption of a contingency approach, the proposed study would like to outline that the external environment of exporting companies also influences export entrepreneurship. Thus, the intensity of competition, market distance between countries where exporters expand increase the degree of entrepreneurship. The study explores the influence of entrepreneurship on exports and the uniqueness of green products on the performance of green product exports, taking the construct of exploitative capacity of green products as an antecedent of uniqueness of green products, competitive capacity and explorative capacity of market distance as antecedents of export entrepreneurship. The results of this study are expected to be practically useful to direct SMEs to create and improve the performance of green products on the international market.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

Export entrepreneurship is defined as an individual and organizational process in taking advantage and opportunities from foreigners, the availability of resources and influencing environmental factors (Ibeh & Young, 2001). This definition highlights the interdependence of entrepreneurial exports on internal factors such as resources and external resources and environmental factors (Santra, 2018). However, Ibeh and Young (2001) consider the definition of entrepreneurial entrepreneurship to refer to companies that are just starting to export. In connection with differences in entrepreneurial level between exporting companies, Ibeh and Young (2001) also define that exporting companies are those that show proactive and aggressiveness in seeking export opportunities in market product innovation. There are three new elements in EE, namely speed, degree, and scope. Speed itself refers to companies starting exports (Acedo & Jones, 2007). That is why the first companies that export are considered as the most entrepreneurial companies, and companies with a clear international orientation (Gallego & Casillas, 2014). Rapid implementation of entering foreign markets is the main key to determining export entrepreneurial orientation. In fact, Acedo and Jones (2007) suggested that spending 6 years as a starting point for starting exports. These factors distinguish International New Ventures (INVS) or Born Globals (BG) which started exporting in the first five years, different from traditional exporters who export after 5 years. Traditional exporters have lower entrepreneurship than INVS or BG, which is the most important character in export companies. Meanwhile, the scope is the total foreign market where exporters do business and make a profit. This concept appears in the literature as the existence and diversification of exports (Ruzo et al., 2011). Measuring the scope also triggers problems in deciding where to place boundaries. Ruzo et al. (2011) assume that more than 10 countries are required to distinguish between companies that tend to be market oriented (export companies with less than 10 countries) or for market diversification, which are considered to be able to show more entrepreneurship. The level and intensity of exports determine the orientation level of export companies in foreign markets (Kuivalainen et al., 2007), with measurements usually through export sales/total sales ratios. In this context, the concept of export entrepreneurship is the process by which companies use exports as a way to expand foreign market opportunities to commercialize goods/services immediately after the first launch in 6 years. Regardless of measurement, companies tend to commercialize their products through market diversification strategies in more than ten countries, and have higher levels of exports or intensity. Export performance is needed as decision making in international markets (Madsen, 1998). Cavusgil and Zou (1994) define export performance as the company's efforts to achieve their goals while exporting in foreign markets related to the economy (profit, sales, costs) or strategy in term of market extension. This can be achieved through planning and implementing their international marketing strategies. There are three aspects of export performance that are taken into account (Rose & Shoham, 2002; Sousa, 2004; Zou et al., 1998; Santra et al., 2019). First, a multidimensional

concept, whose assessment must be based on quantitative steps such as sales, profitability, and growth, and qualitative approaches such as perceptions of success, satisfaction, achievement of goals. Second, evaluation of export performance should not be carried out at certain points in the short term (Lages & Montgomery, 2004). Third, assessment measures must reflect perceptions of managerial performance such as management satisfaction with export performance (Lages et al., 2008).

2.1. Exploitative capacity of green products and the uniqueness of green products

Product differentiation differentiates products from competing products and represents the uniqueness of competitive advantage (Song & Parry, 1997). Exploitation capabilities for product development involve upgrading existing products, technology, and line extensions (Atuahene Gima, 2005). With non-radical changes, some modification features imply a degree of product evolution.

H₁. The higher the company's exploitative capacity green products, the higher the level of uniqueness of green products.

2.2. Exploitative capacity of Green Products and the Uniqueness of Green Products

The capacity of product exploitation refers to efforts to find, assess, and explore exploratory experiments to involve one's ability to develop knowledge, technology and product development (March, 1991; Anggraeni, 2020). They are significantly reflected in what is currently done by the company and related to risk taking, creativity and flexibility. The ability to exploit product development involves knowledge of new technologies and the development of new products for customers. This also refers to efforts to develop new products with emerging ideas and different features leading to product differentiation (Atuahene Gima, 2005).

H₂. The higher the company's ability to exploit green products, the higher the level of uniqueness of green products.

2.3. Competitive Capacity and Export Entrepreneurship

The intensity of competition is the level of competition in foreign markets. This competition is a consequence of the scope of the company's marketing environment (Auh & Menguc, 2005). In the context of exports, in general, the intensity of competition is in line with the massive adaptation of the marketing mix to meet the needs and desires of foreign customers, and also to show greater development of market-oriented behavior (Navarro et al., 2014; Budiharseno, 2017). Thus, regarding the search and utilization of business opportunities in foreign markets, the intensity of competition will affect the scope and level of international orientation (Mittelstaedt et al., 2006).

H₃. The higher the intensity of competition, the higher the degree of export entrepreneurship.

2.4. Explorative capacity of market distance and export entrepreneurship

Sousa and Bradley (2006) define market distance as economic, legal, social and cultural differences between domestic and foreign markets. Market distance is one of the cognitive barriers in international processes and also strongly influences how and when to enter foreign markets (Dow & Larimo, 2009). Thus, market distance makes export companies more conservative in mixed marketing programs (Sousa and Bradley, 2009). This conservatism reduces the entrepreneurial orientation by exporters and gradually reduces the speed of the internalization process (Prime et al., 2009).

H₄. The farther away the market distance, the lower the degree of export entrepreneurship.

2.5. The Uniqueness of Green Products and Green Export Performance

Some researchers have found that product differentiation and company performance have a positive relationship (Bayus et al., 2003). Companies that are able to innovate and launch new products differentiated into the market will be better able to gain competitive advantage compared to their competitors, also experience higher sales and profits (Song and Parry, 1997). Product differentiation is usually followed by skimming or premium pricing strategies, attractive demand and customers, and increased profit margins and lower customer acquisitions (Bayus et al., 2003).

H₅. The higher the level of uniqueness of green products adopted by the company, the higher the level of export performance.

2.6. Export Entrepreneurship and Green Export Performance

Previous studies have shown that the scope of international exports carried out in several countries affects export performance (Ruzo et al., 2011). Thus, exporters who are able to expand goods and services simultaneously in some countries are more likely to be able to achieve higher prices than exporters with narrow export coverage. Other findings also underline that accelerated development in international processes shows that large international organizations and broader perceptions of entrepreneurship, this will affect the performance of foreign markets (Kuivalainen et al., 2012; Powell, 2014; Zahra et al., 2000). Several studies also show that the organization's export orientation positively influences export performance. Then, managers who are actively seeking opportunities in foreign markets will be more likely to be able to produce a larger export orientation that will experience higher sales and profits, and furthermore, will have higher export performance satisfaction compared to managers with international lower (Wahyuni & Ginting, 2017; Ibeh, 2004).

H₆. The higher the export entrepreneurship, the higher the level of export performance.

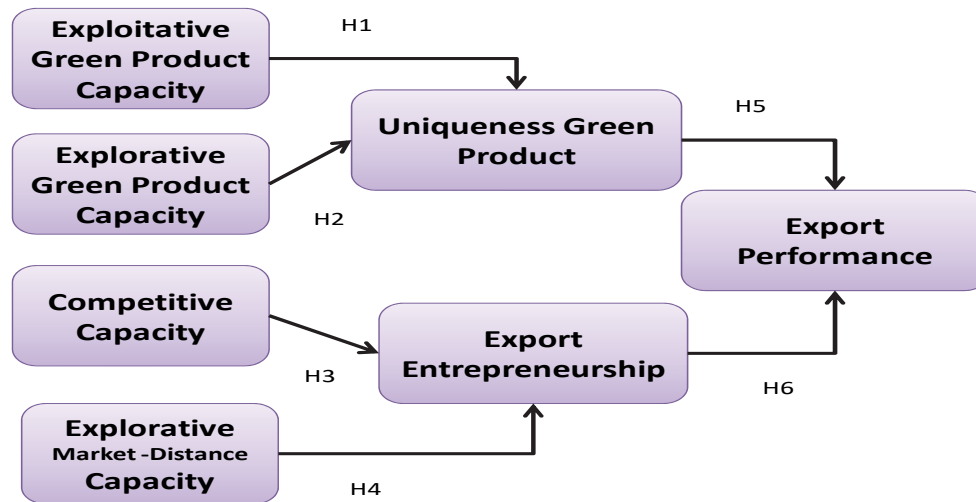


Fig. 1. The research framework

3.4. Data collection

This study is an empirical study using samples from small Indonesian companies that have been exporting for the past five years. The survey was conducted via email with 500 questionnaires sent. The response rate was 388 questionnaires returned to the researcher. This questionnaire, after tabulation and coding, is used for further analysis. The research method for analyzing data used SEM with AMOS statistical software and assessing the relationship between constructs.

3.5. Non-response and general method bias

Non-response bias was tested by comparing the initial and final respondents with respect to operational years, the number of full-time employees and also the number of export markets, so that insignificant differences would not be detected.

4. Analysis

4.1. Sample characteristics

The sample involved in this study is a small and medium scale company. To determine the feasibility of the company to be included in the SME classification, this study uses the standard number of full-time employees. Full-time employees are considered as one of the nature of the company and involvement in the international market and the length of operations. Companies with all the characters indicated indicate to participate in this research sample.

4.2. Measurement validation

Testing of confirmatory factor models with all items loading on a single latent factor shows good suitability. The results of the measurement model presented in Table 1 show conformity (chi-square of 520.982,393 df, $p < .000$, CFI = .976, AGFI = .904, GFI = .919, TLI = .973, RMSEA = .029).

Table 1

Goodness of Fit

Goodness of Fit Indices	Cut-off-value	Results	Confirmation
Chi-square	small	520,982.393	Fit
Sig.	0.00	>0.05	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.95	.976	Fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	.904	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	.919	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.90	.973	Fit
RMSEA	<0.08	.029	Fit

The test results as in Table 2 also show that all constructs have a good level of composite reliability. The standardized load size of each item in the intended construct (mean loading size, .50) provides evidence of convergent validity.

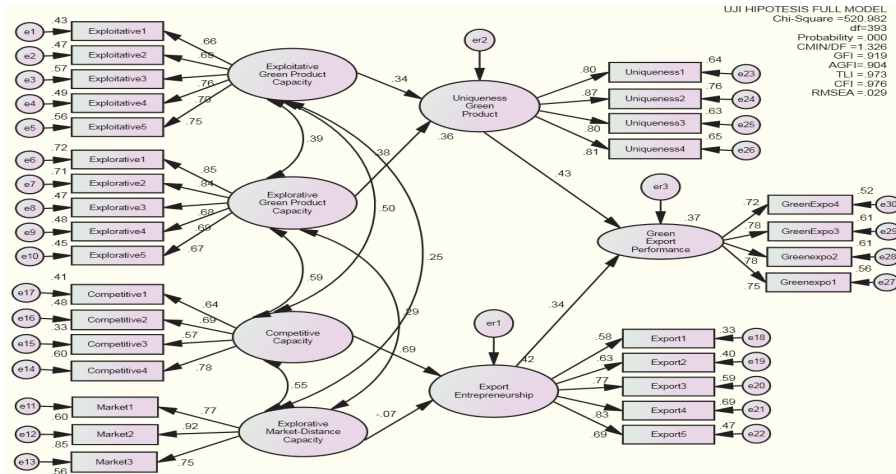


Fig. 2. Full Structural Analysis

Table 2
 Measurement Scales and Loading Factors

Constructs and Items Standardized	Loading
<i>Exploitative Green Product Capabilities (EGPC)</i>	
• Exploitative capability improves green products	0.66
• Exploitative capability improves green products on services and process quality	0.69
• Exploitative capability upgrades green technologies for green products and green services	0.76
• Exploitative capability enhances skills in exploiting sophisticated technologies to gain green products.	0.70
• Exploitative capability upgrades skills in product development processes with green practices	0.75
<i>Explorative Green Product Capabilities (EGPC)</i>	
• Explorative capability firstly deployed green technology	0.85
• Explorative capability which is new to the industry.	0.84
• Explorative capability as new green skills on technology, staffing, training and development of R&D.	0.68
• Explorative capability strengthens green innovation skills with no prior experience.	0.69
• Explorative capability choose new green approaches to export products, services, and processes different from those used in the past	0.67
<i>Competitive Capacity (CC)</i>	
• Firms' capacity strengthens overseas distributor relationships.	0.64
• Firms' capacity to capture of important market information of existing markets.	0.69
• Firms' capacity to monitor competitive products in current export markets.	0.57
• Firms' capacity to response overseas customer requirements.	0.78
<i>Explorative Capacity of Market Distance (ECMD)</i>	
• firms capacity to adapt to foreign customers' needs	0.77
• firms capacity to develop market-oriented behaviors	0.92
• firms capacity to seek foreign market	0.75
<i>Export Entrepreneurship (EE)</i>	
• Capable to acquire export market-related information of new markets	0.58
• Capable to assess the potential of new markets.	0.63
• Capable to search new competitors and new customers.	0.77
• Capable to leverage market's share growth higher than previous periods.	0.83
• Capable to expand export entrepreneurship	0.69
<i>Uniqueness Green Product (UGP)</i>	
• New green products difficult for competition to imitate.	0.64
• New green product designs are unique.	0.76
• New green products have higher advantage compared with competitors.	0.63
• New green products have versatile functions compared with competitors.	0.65
<i>Green Export Performance (GEP)</i>	
• Firm export market's sales volume growth higher than previous periods.	0.72
• Firm growth in export market sales revenue higher than previous periods.	0.78
• Firm's acquiring new export market customers higher than previous periods.	0.78
• Firm's increasing sales to current export customers higher than previous periods.	0.75

Notes: variance extracted and composite reliability (Fornell dan Larcker, 1981).

4. Results

This study uses structural equation modeling to test the hypotheses. Table 3 shows the estimated standard parameters, CR, and the level of significance for the hypothesis path.

Table 3
Regression Weights and Hypotheses Testing

		Hypotheses	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypotheses
Uniqueness Green Product	←	Exploitative Capacity of Green Product	.355	.061	5.765	***	Supported
Uniqueness Green Product	←	Explorative Capacity of Green Product	.396	.063	6.250	***	Supported
Export Entrepreneurship	←	Competitive Capacity	.725	.101	7.152	***	Supported
Export Entrepreneurship	←	Explorative Capacity of Market-Distance	-.052	.046	-1.133	.257	Supported
Green Export Performance	←	Uniqueness Green Products	.434	.059	7.348	***	Supported
Green Export Performance	←	Export Entrepreneurship	.469	.085	5.535	***	Supported

Statistical output reveals that H1 stating that the higher the level of capacity for exploiting green products, the higher the level of uniqueness of green products was proven empirically, supported by the value of C.R = 5.765 with a significance value of 0.00 (<0.05). This result confirms the ability and capacity of exporting SMEs to exploit green products to improve the uniqueness of green products. The study measures the exploitation of green products through the basis of environmental technology, the company's ability to improve green products, the company's ability to improve green products on service and process quality. The results confirmed that exploiting green products are more likely to improve green technology for green products and improve green services in exploiting advanced technology to meet the green product standards and improve skills in the process of developing products with environmentally friendly practices. Green exploitation carried out by this company directly and positively influences the level of uniqueness of green products, which confirms the hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 which states that the higher the level of capacity for exploiting green products, the higher the level of uniqueness of green products is accepted with a value of C.R = 6.250, with a significance value of 0.00. This confirms that Resource-based View underlines that one of the main resources for the uniqueness of green products is the company's ability to explore green products. Thus, the results show that the company's exploration capabilities are related to general learning and company experience with such strategies as deploying green technology, green products and process development, new green skills in technology, research and development (R & D) division training and development, strengthening green innovation skills and new approaches. In addition, this resource exploration capability is considered the basis of decision making, and influences the uniqueness of green products in justifying H2.

Testing of hypothesis 3 which states that the higher the level of competitive capacity adopted by the company, the higher the degree of export entrepreneurship, shows results that are proven to be empirically accepted with a value of C.R = 7.152, with a significance value of 0.00. These results have theoretical implications that competitive intensity forces companies to compete and adapt to several strategies in foreign markets (Navarro et al., 2014). The results show that several strategies must be used by companies in competing foreign markets, such as, strengthening the relations of foreign distributors, capturing related market information, monitoring competitive products in today's foreign markets and quickly responding to customer requirements. These factors greatly influence the scope of foreign market orientation and achieve excellence (Mittelstaedt et al., 2006). By winning the competition, the company will experience higher export entrepreneurship, confirming hypothesis 3.

The results of testing hypothesis 4 state that the higher the level of explorative capacity of market distance carried out by the company, the higher the export entrepreneurship, the results that are rejected with the value C.R = -1.133, with a significance value of 0.257 (> 0.05). These results prove that the longer the distance explorative capacity of the market and more likely to reduce the level of export entrepreneurship is designed to link the distance between the market and entrepreneurial exports. In this study, this construct is measured by the company's capacity to adjust the needs of foreign customers, the capacity to develop market-oriented behavior and the capacity to find foreign markets. Thus, the availability of resources and this capacity is determined to reduce barriers to exploring market distance (Cadogan et al., 2012). Market distance usually encourages the development of market orientation, and forces companies to develop market information and strategies to meet foreign customers (Navarro et al., 2014). This is to confirm that SMEs tend to be unable to explore foreign markets to increase their exports.

Furthermore, testing hypothesis 5, the higher the level of uniqueness of green products, the higher the level of performance of green exports reveals the value of C.R = 7.348, with a significance value of 0.00. So, hypothesis 5 is accepted. In this context, to win the competition, the company recommends producing green and unique products. This research proves that the uniqueness of green products is measured by products that are unmatched by competitors, unique product designs, superior advantages, and versatile functions. the results of Setiadi et al. (2017) demonstrating that environmental marketing strategy is more likely to affect marketing performance of Indonesian exporting firms. This measurement guarantees the uniqueness of green products.

The test also proved empirically the effect of export entrepreneurship on export performance, with a value of C.R = 5.535. Thus, hypothesis 6 which states that export entrepreneurship has an influence on the performance of exports is accepted. These results indicate that through acceleration and development of internationalization, export companies gained sales volume growth, higher market sales revenue, higher foreign markets, and higher sales. Exporters must also develop market

diversification strategies, which lead to green export performance (Ruzo et al., 2011). Higher green export performance is also obtained from export orientation and large participation in foreign markets (Kuivalainen et al., 2012).

6. Conclusion

The findings show that the capacity of exploitative green products and green product exploitative capacity shows a significant impact on uniqueness of green products. Competitive capacity and market distance explorative capacity have positive significant effects on export entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the uniqueness of green products has a significant positive effect on export entrepreneurship, and has a significant positive effect on the performance of green exports. This finding indicates the importance of exploiting green products to improve export performance by SMEs in Indonesia. The findings of this study confirm the RBV by noting that internal factors, personal-managerial export commitments and company performance and structural impacts affect the level of entrepreneurial exports. The second finding with the application of a contingency approach suggests that the external environment of exporting companies also influences export entrepreneurship. Thus, the intensity of competition, market distance between countries where exporters expand and increase the degree of entrepreneurship. The findings also show the positive impact of export entrepreneurship on quantitative export performance of sales growth and qualitative, in terms of consumer satisfaction. Based on these findings, systematic decisions can be made based on findings mentioned by exporters. Some managerial implications such as management must take part and be proactive in exporting and focusing on exploring and exploiting foreign markets. Second, exporters must design and implement specific strategies and steps in decision making. Finally, export SMEs must pay attention to the trading mechanism, find out competitors during high competition and also companies must improve dynamic capabilities such as foreign market orientation. This study has several limitations. The companies in this study are diverse, future studies must consider the same category of companies and consider the characteristics of export products. Samples are all exporting companies with different products. Future research must determine the size, character and active period of the company.

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