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Pure and Applied SciencesJournal homepage: www.Sjournals.com**Original article****Identifying and ranking factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry****N. Mina^{a,*}, S. Habobollah^b, H. Ebrahim^c**^a*Department of Management, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran.*^b*Faculty of Management, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran.*^c*Department of Management, Islamic Azad University, Zahedan, Iran.*^{*}Corresponding author; Department of Management, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran.

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ABSTRACT

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Influencing physical environment and valued-entrepreneurship effects on community; it reduces unemployment by creating value; it also leads the society to employment and production rather than consumption. This study aimed to identify and rank factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan. After reviewing literatures as well as doing interviews, a questionnaire with 66 items was developed by the researcher. Using snowball sampling method, 106 executives and experts related to palm industry in Saravan were selected and questionnaires were distributed among them. Data were analyzed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis methods. Results showed that six factors affect entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan. "Marketing" with the scale of 0.89 had the greatest impact.

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1. Introduction

In the 1960s, many economists recognized the role of entrepreneurship in modern economy. It was considered as the fourth factor of production and considerable resources were devoted to the study of this

phenomenon(Matlay, 2005). Many experts believe that the main problem in today's under developed countries is not the capital (either financial or human), but lack of entrepreneurship. Capital must be combined with entrepreneurship to change the status of these countries (Akhtar et al., 2013) Entrepreneurship is not just stating theory, but applying the theory in practice (Morris and Schraeder, 2007). This is what distinguishes entrepreneurs from others (i.e. managers, leaders, and politicians).

The combination of high unemployment with low economic growth makes policy-makers more attentive to entrepreneurship and self-employment as the ways to improve economy and reduce unemployment(Marcus, 2013) . Entrepreneurship influences in communities and its resources. It effects on physical environment, values, and purposeful effort; so, it affects the society in which it is located(Morrison, 2000) . Entrepreneurship reduces unemployment in the community, makes value, and leads the society into an active and productive society rather than consumer one.

This study was done to identify and rank factors which influence entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan so that developing entrepreneurship in palm industry in Sistan and Baluchestan can be achieved.

First, definitions of entrepreneurship and its importance in palm industry in the province will be mentioned; then, research method and findings analysis as well as research results will be discussed.

2. Research statement

For years, government's large size hurts people; also people's high expectation is a heavy burden on the government. Entrepreneurship is the way to escape from such impasse. Entrepreneurship makes the society free of employee-orientation and sheer dependency to government. On the other hand, unemployment has always considered as one of the biggest economic, social, and political problems in the society. Policies to create jobs and reduce unemployment are the most important priorities of governments(Biriya and Ameli, 2006) .

This is more obvious in underdeveloped countries. Although entrepreneurship does not mean job creation and such a mere perception is a big mistake, it must be said that one of the major outcomes of entrepreneurship is job creation. The relationship between self-employment and unemployment has been considered among European policy-makers in considerable level (Brown and Taylor, 2013). Adertaschand Toric showed that the increase of entrepreneurship rate in 23 OECD countries resulted in lowering unemployment in 1894-1994(Baptista and Thurik, 2007) .In fact, growth or poverty of a country depends on entrepreneurship; if entrepreneurship is accepted as a career by the most members of a society, development will accelerate there (Boadway et al., 2005).

This is especially important in Iran which has a single-product economy. Based on the forth Development Plan, 4480000 job opportunities should have created; creating the average of 900000job opportunities annually until unemployment rate decreases to 8.4 percent; but this has not been achieved so far. One way to stop single-product economy is to focus on agricultural sector. Agricultural development has been introduced as the main strategy for rural development so that projects such as "totally rural development" have been based on it(Nouri abadi and Amini, 2007) . Agricultural development is not limited to increasing performance; it also includes diversification of production, reducing waste, and making value-added(Sharifzadeh et al., 2007).The development of entrepreneurial small and medium enterprises is a critical indicator for rural development to which, unfortunately, there is not much attention in the field of agriculture (Moradinejad, 2007).The new business environment has made entrepreneurs' activities harder; it has also made it essential to have required knowledge for removing obstacles. Therefore, it can be the first step to identify barriers for entrepreneurship in supplementary and agricultural industries(Rezaei et al., 2013) .

Producing 20 percent of the world's date, Iran is the second producer.30% of nuts exports and 10% of non-oil exports has been devoted to date; so it has an important place in agricultural economy (Ministry of Commerce of Iran, 2008). Sistan and Baluchestan, a region with luxuriant palm gardens and 36 thousand hectares cultivation area as well as about 190 thousand tons of dates annually, is the second largest producer of this product, after Khuzestan. Saravan with16, 000 hectares palm-cultivated area and an annual production of 42,000 tons has the first rank among the province. 63 types of dates have been identified in Saravan including Mazafati, Rabbi, Rangenjo, Poppo, Vashkank, Zardaan, Korotch,Sabzo, Pimaazo, Makiki and Baarshahi . There are 8 date refrigerators in this city with the capacity of about 9 tons. There are also two official workshops for packaging dates and over 50 informal workshops which usually do their seasonal activities at home. Unfortunately, there is no active factory related to processing and supplementary industries in the city and private sector has not invested in this field (Organization of agriculture in Saravan, 2013)

Considering the importance of date in this city, investigating factors affecting entrepreneurship success and failure in palm industry in Saravan is critical; whereas, products of this city are packaged and exported to domestic and foreign markets with other provinces' name due to lack of suitable investment.

Hence, the main research questionnaires are: "What are factors leading to entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan?" "What is the rank of these factors in terms of affecting palm industry in Saravan?"

2.1. Research questions and hypotheses

To achieve the conceptual model and rank factors, questions were used. Once the conceptual model was developed, hypotheses were used to test the significance of relationships as well as investigate each variable.

Question 1: What are the factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan?

Question 2: What is the priority of factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan?

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between effective factors and entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan.

Hypothesis 2: All factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan are in appropriate condition.

3. Theoretical background and literature review

3.1. Concepts and nature of entrepreneurship

It may not be easy to offer a general and united concept for entrepreneurship (Klofsten, 2000). Because of its history, entrepreneurship has taken on different meanings. In the early centuries, it was related to economic transition; in the Middle Ages, it was predicated to the owners of large projects (Hisrich et al., 2005, Zabihi and Moghadasi, 2006). In the 17th and 18th centuries, it was defined together with risk-taking and eventually, innovation was considered as one of the basic elements in entrepreneurship.

Lexicon Webster Dictionary (Gove, 1971) described the term entrepreneur as follows: "A person who accepts the risks of a business or an institution and manages it." In Oxford Dictionary, entrepreneur is described as committed, manager, controller, and supporter. The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1979) stated that an entrepreneur is a person responsible for all the activities of a business such as product selection, relocation funding, decisions about the quality and price of product, employment, and reducing or expanding facilities. Based on English BBC Dictionary (1993), entrepreneur is "a person who starts a business" (Nandan, 2007).

However, Johnson believes that entrepreneurship, in its narrowest concept which it includes capturing ideas, converting them into products or services, and taking risk to send the product to market (Johnson, 2001). Schumpeter defines it in simple words as a change in resource allocation (Deamer, 2004). In Great Britain's traditional culture, entrepreneurship and entrepreneur is called to a particular selfishness and individualism approach in business. From this perspective, entrepreneurs are considered as leading individuals who work based on their own values and laws (Gray, 2007). Some other researchers tried to conceptualize entrepreneurship regarding to different variables such as innovation, risk-taking, variability, and value-making (Table 1).

Table 1
Definitions of entrepreneurship.

Theorist	Regarded variable	Point of view	Description
(Schumpeter, 1954)	Innovation Risk-taking	Economic	Entrepreneur is the innovator who uses unimplemented technologies.
(Timmoms, 1989)	Value-making		Creating something valuable out of nothing.
(Hisrich et al., 2005)	Innovation		Developing something unique.
(Zhao, 2005)	Innovation	Managerial	Establishing a company based on a new idea.
(Nandan, 2007)	Innovation	Managerial	Establishing and running a new business.

In general, the majority of experts believe that entrepreneurship is a behavior involves providing solutions, organizing or reorganizing economic mechanisms to optimize resources as well as accept the risk of failure (Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2001).

3.2. Dimensions and critical success factors in entrepreneurship

The following table shows factors which affect success in palm industry, based on studies conducted by different researchers about factors influencing entrepreneurship. In this study and after reviewing literatures, a list of factors affecting entrepreneurship was prepared and by doing interviews with experts related to palm industry in Saravan, the factors were localized.

Table 2
Factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry.

Variable	Researcher
Underlying	(Callaway, 2004)
Government policy-making and facilitating	(Kirby, 2003)
Marketing	(Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2001)
Socio-cultural environment	(Kearney et al., 2008) (Morris and Lewis, 1995)
Managerial support	interview
Personal characteristics	Kirby (2003), (Cuervo, 2005, Tang et al., 2008)

Based on the theoretical background and factors shown in Table 2, research conceptual model can be presented as follow:

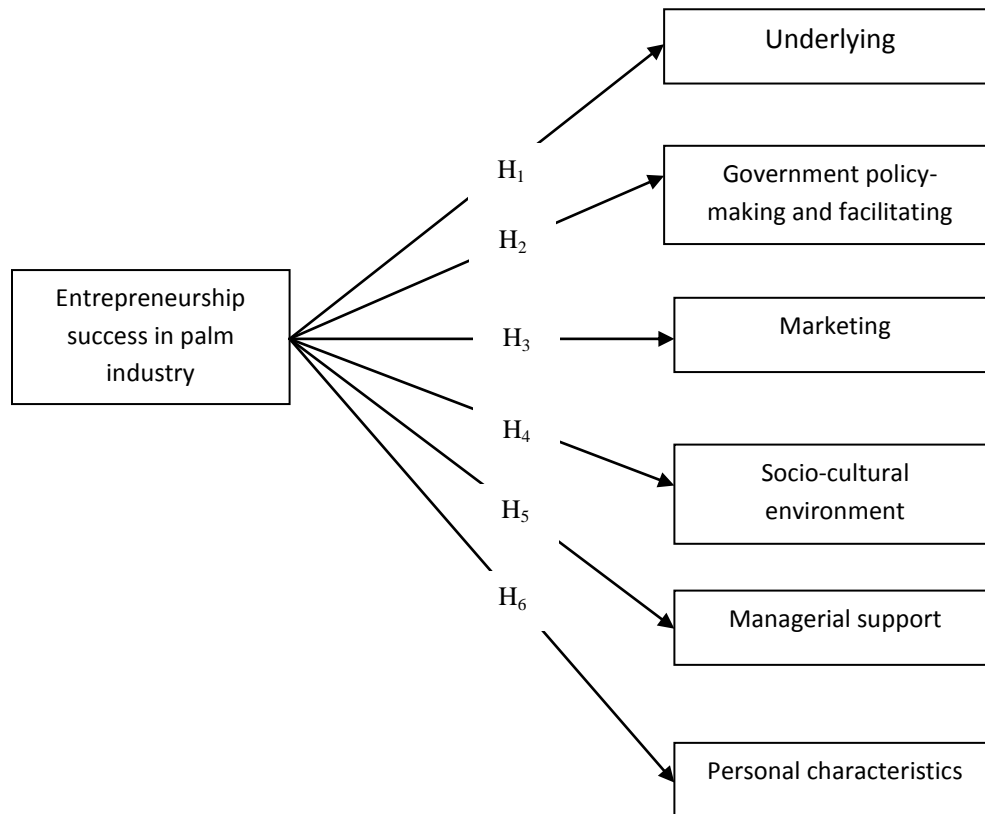


Fig. 1. Research conceptual model.

4. Materials and methods

This is an applied, descriptive study in terms of goal and data collecting method, respectively. It is also considered as a branch of field studies. This research has been done in survey method.

4.1. Data collection methods

Data required for this research has been collected through surveys and library studies, interviews, and questionnaires. After reading related books and articles, an interview was done with 15 experts and professionals in palm industry in Saravan. Then, the main factors were extracted and compiled in a list. After that, the list was completed using previous researches and literature reviews, leading to a researcher-made questionnaire to collect data. It was measured both status quo and the importance of factors. The questionnaire consisted of 66 items related to the concepts affecting entrepreneurship, has measured six factors as underlying factors, government policy-making and facilitating, marketing, socio-cultural environment, managerial support, and personal characteristics. It was distributed among 106 experts related to palm industry in Saravan.

4.2. Reliability and validity of research tools

To test validity of questions, content validity as well as divergent and convergent validity tests was used. To assess content validity, 20 questionnaires were distributed among a group of experts, ambiguities about questions were determined, and designed items were revised. Divergent and convergent validity is obtained through factor analysis. By exploratory factor analysis, the amount of KMO was 0.77 which indicates adequate sampling. Because the significant coefficient was zero (less than 0.05), factor analysis to identify structure was diagnosed appropriate. After confirming research model, confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess its accuracy. The results showed that all scales were above 0.5 which indicates convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.90 which indicates the reliability of the questionnaire.

4.3. Research population and sample

Research population consisted of all employees, experts, and practitioners of palm industry in Sistan and Baluchestan province and Saravan. To cover the population and using snowball sampling method, 120 experts were identified and questionnaire was distributed among them. 106 questionnaires were suitable for analysis.

4.4. Data analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was used to extract factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan. To examine suitable state of variables, mean comparison test was applied. Also, structural equation modeling and confirmatory factor analysis were used to test accuracy of research measurement model.

4.5. Exploratory factor analysis

Factor analysis is applicable both in exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In this study, exploratory factor analysis was used to identify the latent variables. 66 items was designed for entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan; then, latent factors were determined by first-order and second-order exploratory factor analysis and the conceptual model was developed. Finally, accuracy of confirmatory factor analysis test results was examined using exploratory factor analysis.

In exploratory factor analysis which can be done using SPSS software, the scale of variables should be more than 0.5. All scales in this study were determined and considered more than 0.5. LISREL software was used to perform a confirmatory factor analysis.

Results of first-order exploratory factor analysis showed that questions were classified in 16 dimensions; factors in questions 1 to 11, 15, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 58, 61, 63, and 66 were omitted from factor analysis due to poor scales. Among 9 remained elements, factors 7, 8, and 9 were also omitted because they were related to the same question. Finally, 6 factors were considered suitable for analysis which, according to the theoretical background, were named as follows: Factor 1 (questions 4, 5, 12, 13) "Underlying"; factor 2 (questions 14, 16, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32) "Government policy-making and facilitating"; factor 3

(questions 33, 34, 41) "Marketing"; factor 4 (questions 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48), "socio-cultural environment"; factor 5 (questions 52, 56, 57, 59) "Managerial"; factor 6 (questions 60, 62, 64, 65) "personal". The scale of KMO and significance of Bartlett test for exploratory factor analysis in SPSS were 0.772 and 0.00, respectively. Also, these 6 factors explain about 70% of variance for scales related to entrepreneurship success in palm industry.

4.6. Exploratory factor analysis of the industry's second most successful entrepreneurial dates

After first-order factor analysis, the mean scores for each identified factor were entered into second-order factor analysis. Second-order factor analysis was done in order to achieve the scores for entrepreneurship success in palm industry. The scale of KMO and significance of Bartlett test for exploratory factor analysis in SPSS were 0.769 and 0.00, respectively. Following Table shows identified factors as well as scales. These 6 factors explain 100% of variance for scales related to entrepreneurship success in palm industry (Table 3).

Table 3
Second-order factor analysis.

Factors	Scales
Underlying	0.529
Policy-making and facilitating	0.738
Marketing	0.794
Cultural	0.684
Managerial	0.699
Personal	0.525

4.7. Population mean test

In order to investigate research variables, population mean test was used. According to this test, if significance value is more than 0.05, there is no significant difference between the state of variable and considered mean (number 3 in the middle of Likert scale). Also, if both lower and upper limits are positive, the state of variable is determined as appropriate; if they are both negative, it is determined as inappropriate.

Table 4
One-sample test.

	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
					Test Value = 3	
Underlying	-8.783	105	.000	-.82311	-1.0089	-.6373
Policy-making and Facilitating	-20.620	105	.000	-1.28167	-1.4049	-1.1584
Marketing	-21.893	105	.000	-1.39308	-1.5193	-1.2669
Socio-cultural	-15.904	105	.000	-1.08019	-1.2149	-.9455
Managerial	-17.986	105	.000	-1.17925	-1.3092	-1.0492
Personal	-27.709	105	.000	-1.35849	-1.4557	-1.2613

According to Table 4, significant value in all factors is less than 0.05; so null hypothesis ($\mu \leq 3$) is rejected and the main hypothesis ($\mu > 3$) is approved. If the upper and lower limits are both positive, it means that the factor is in appropriate state. If the upper and lower limits are both negative, it means that the state of factor is fairly inappropriate. Based on above results, it can be stated that all factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan are at inappropriate situation.

4.8. Friedman test (variable ranking)

H0: Mean for all ranks is the same.

H1: There are at least two ranks with different mean.

Friedman test has two outputs. The first output is descriptive statistics which shows mean rank for each variable. The smaller mean rank, the more important variable.

Table 5

Friedman test statistics.

N	106
Chi-Square	92.024
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

According to Table 5, is significance value is smaller than 0.05; it can be concluded that there is difference at least between two factors.

Table 6

Friedman test ranks.

	Mean rank
Underlying	4.66
Policy-making and Facilitating	3.59
Marketing	2.92
Socio-cultural	4.33
Managerial	3.87
Personal	3.46

According to Table 6, it can be stated that the most important factor which influencing the success of entrepreneurship in palm industry in Saravan is " marketing " factor; " underlying " is considered as the least important factor.

5. Results and discussion

Many experts believe that today’s problem in underdeveloped countries is not the capital (either financial or human), but the lack of entrepreneurship. Capital must be combined with entrepreneurship to change the situation in these countries. Current study aimed to identify and rank factors that influence entrepreneurship success in palm industry dates in Saravan. First, research literature had been studied; then through interviews with experts and professionals related to palm industry in Saravan, six factors including “underlying”, “government policy-making and facilitating”, “marketing”, “socio-cultural”, “managerial support”, and “personal” factors were identified as affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan; finally, the conceptual model was developed. At the next step, a number of questions were designed for each dimension; a questionnaire was developed and then distributed among experts and executives in palm industry in Saravan.

To prioritize factors affecting the success of entrepreneurship in palm industry, Friedman test was used. The results showed that “underlying “factors were the most important ones on expert’s point of view; other factors as “socio-cultural”, “government policy-making and facilitating”, “managerial support”, “personal”, and “marketing” were in the next ranks. Results also showed that all the factors affecting entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan are in inappropriate condition.

Based on the results from structural equation modeling analysis, it was determined that all identified factors affect the success of entrepreneurship in palm industry in Saravan. So, research hypotheses were confirmed. In other words, if each effective factor is enhanced and improved, the possibility of entrepreneurship success in palm industry in Saravan will increase. In short, all factors have been identified as effective for entrepreneurship success in palm industry; investigating and identifying each of these factors will play an important role achieving success and gaining competitive advantage over other competitors.

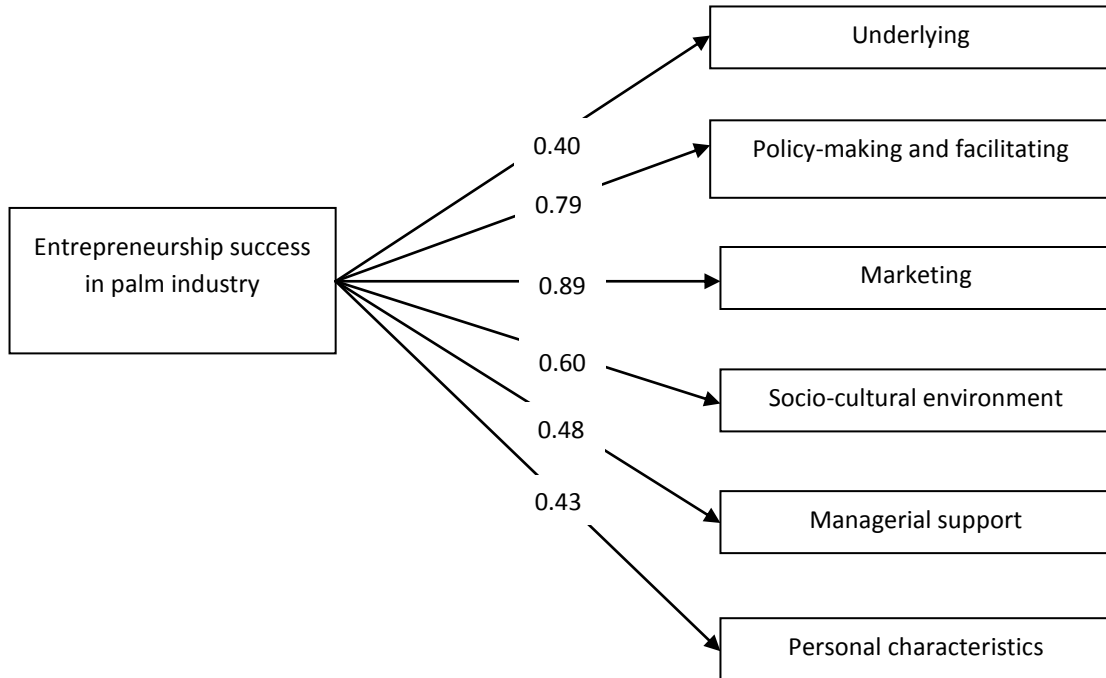


Fig. 4. Research practical model.

According to research conceptual model (Figure, 1), marketing for date in Saravan is the utmost importance. So, it can be stated that the main reason of non-development in palm industry in Saravan and the province in general are lack of specific Brand for dates, traditional way of producing, and lack of attention to marketing mix. Sistan and Baluchestan, a region with luxuriant palm gardens and 36 thousand hectares cultivation area as well as about 190 thousand tons of dates annually, is the second largest producer of this product, after Khuzestan. Due to lack of suitable investment, products of this city are packaged and exported to domestic and foreign markets with other provinces' name. Inappropriate situation of Sistan and Baluchestan in date export makes identity of real manufacturers unknown; value-added from these hard-working men are being received to others. Also, due to the lack of proper investment and weak private sector participation, fifth and sixth provinces in date production have better condition in packaging and processing than Sistan and Baluchestan. The price of Iran's date is very low comparing with the world; so that our date is four times less than the price in palm-exporting countries, such as Tunisia. On the other hand, the price of date in Sistan and Baluchistan has the same condition as Iran's date in the world; dates in this province and the city Saravan are sold at lower prices than in other provinces. So, farmers of this region gain very little profit from selling their dates. In this regard, it is suggested that government may invite and encourage private sector in order to provide appropriate condition for investment in palm industry; encourage farmers to use facilities granted for improving and expanding palm gardens and the possibility of more profits. This requires making cultural infrastructure in the province.

It is also suggested that financial mediation in dates should be regulated in a logical format; because the factor which causes high difference between purchase price and buying price is irrational financial mediation. This situation should be organized by some related communities and supervised by Commerce Development Organization and Ministry of Agriculture.

6. Conclusions

Research results showed that the factors affecting entrepreneurship success include underlying, policy-making and facilitating, marketing, socio-cultural, managerial support and personal characteristics (Figure 4). Results are consistent with (Callaway, 2004), (Kirby, 2003), (Kuratko and Hodgetts, 2001), (Kearney et al., 2008), (Morris and Lewis, 1995), (Tang et al., 2008), (Cuervo, 2005).

In order to overcome mentioned problems leading to success and development in palm industry in Saravan, following suggestions are offered:

1. Tending from traditional into modern agriculture with regard to management principles and agricultural science. This requires the support of private sector as well as offering low interest financial facilities to farmers. However, making cultural infrastructure can play an important role in this regard.

2 – Replacing old palm gardens using plant tissue cultivation and private sector support. Plant tissue cultivation is a technique for production and proliferation of the whole plant from some parts such as cell or plant tissue. The proliferation is called micro-reproduction which is possible in two methods: producing plantlets through organogenesis, and somatic embryogenesis or germinated reactivation. In both methods, a sterile lab with purified air is required. Fortunately in recent years, the technology of producing palm tissue cultivation has been entered and localized in our country.

3 –Regulating financial mediation in a logical format. Financial mediation in dates should be regulated in a logical format; because the factor which causes high difference between purchase price and buying price is irrational financial mediation. This situation should be organized by some related communities and supervised by Commerce Development Organization and Ministry of Agriculture. Omitting logical mediations is not correct; so, there should be special places across the country for communities so as they can regulate and organize date market by distributing the product directly.

4 – Establishing factories for processing and packaging dates. Packing and processing plants, according with international standards and appropriate marketing, play an important role in agricultural economy. It also can avoid exporting dates in bulk. Providing well-packed date to world and Iran's market would have great value-added and, more importantly, great employment.

5 –Appropriate policy for packaging dates. Another important issue in processing dates is policies on processing and packaging dates. In other words, we must first know which date product has the largest market in the country. By identifying them, date products would be produced.

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*Saravan is a city from Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Saravan is located in southeast point of it and has 384 K.M common boundaries with Pakistan. Saravan is known as the birthplace of the sun in Iran(sportal.ir). Saravan is one of the most important areas for date production. Saravan with 16,000 hectares palm-cultivated area and an annual production of 42,000 tons has the first rank among the province. 63 types of dates have been identified in Saravan including Mazafati, Rabbi, Rangeno, Poppo, Vashkank, Zardaan, Korotch, Sabzo, Pimaazo, Makiki, Halileh, Charpaan and Baarshahi . There are 8 date refrigerators in this city with the capacity of about 9 tons. There are also two official workshops for packaging dates and over 50 informal workshops which usually do their seasonal activities at home. Unfortunately, there is no active factory related to processing and supplementary industries in the city and private sector has not invested in this field (Organization of agriculture in Saravan, 2013)

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