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The Effect of Marketing Information Systems in Establishing Competitive Strategies In Dermot-Cosmetic Companies

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CHRONICLE	Abstract
<p>Article history: Received: 05/11/2018 Received in revised: 14/02/2019 Accepted: 16/01/2020</p>	<p>Nowadays marketers complain about the lack of correct information or large amount of misinformation. The problem that managers deal with is not shortage of knowledge, but massive information. To overcome this problem, a good marketing information system balances the information users really need and what is feasible to offer.</p>
<p>Keywords: * Marketing information system, *competitive strategies, *cultural strategies, * demo-cosmetic companies</p>	<p>The objective of this study is to investigate the effect of marketing information systems in formulation of competitive strategies with the role of cultural strategies in case study of Dermot-cosmetic companies. Based on the objectives of this research and data collection, method of the research is applied research and type of research is descriptive-survey. Population of the study consisted of 500 managers of Dermot-cosmetic companies from Tehran city. Using the Cochran formula, 218 samples were evaluated. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaire which consisted of 44 items. The face and content reliability of the research were evaluated by 30 experts and the validity was examined by preliminary test with 30 subjects for all variables and it was higher than (0.7) which is considered acceptable in this research. Data was analyzed through the descriptive and inferential statistics of exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 24 and confirmatory factor analysis with Smart PLS 2. Time, content, form access and outputs of marketing information system affect marketing information system. Marketing information system technology has a significant effect on the formulation of cultural strategies and marketing information system and cultural strategies have significant effect on competitive strategies.</p>
	<p>using marketing information system can help to develop optimal competitive strategies. Also, cultural strategies play the role of a mediator between marketing information systems and competitive strategies and strengthen the effect of marketing information systems on these strategies.</p>

Introduction

specific time period and it is formulated on the basis of an analytical, logical and systematic approach to achieving competitive advantage, so that all decisions have internal coherence (through the strategic planning and comprehensive organizational strategies) and external coherence and consistency (factors and market conditions). Competitive advantage is a company's ability to outperform its rivals due to its products or services either being unique and in high demand. Also, it is what makes a company's goods or services superior to all of a customer's other choices. Strategies do not have direct influence on organizational performance, but resources and capabilities are basis for creating optimal performance and competitive advantage. Resources and capabilities are reflected through organizational activities since they are difficult to imitate by competitors and cannot find them easy replacement. Barney (1991) states the resources and capabilities that can create sustainable competitive advantage, they get value, and they should be rare and cannot be imitated and easily be replaced. The difference in performance is caused mainly by unique resources and company capabilities in a same industry and strategies, but companies have difficulty in creating or even identifying their own resources (Hosseini Brenti & Sadeghi, 2014).

Since Dermo cosmetic products have occupied high of global markets because of large consumer of this product. Dermo-cosmetic products marketings is important and essential because the number of known and unknown brands of this product are imported from Persian Gulf states, South East Asia and China is increasing every day. On the other

In 1990s, experts found out that customer-oriented and market-oriented organizations achieve greater success in global markets since competitive success in marketing depends on the recognition of markets, customers and competitors. Studies reveal that the main factor of organizations' failure is the absence of adequate knowledge of consumers and markets; although new products may be marketed, they will get a fail due to negligible demand that results from marketing decisions on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information (Azad & Sharifi, 2012). However, excessive information will also be troublesome as much as incomplete and inaccurate information. Thus, there should be used a marketing information system to report necessary information to relevant users at proper time.

A marketing information system is the set of people, equipment, and procedures to gather, sort, analyze, evaluate, and distribute needed, timely and accurate information to marketing decision makers. Not only, a marketing information system is a center of storing all relevant information related to the customers, but also it serves as a center of collecting, storing and analyzing information about the marketing mix, rivals, macroeconomic variables, and information and internal documents of the company (Tomcik, 2015). Accordingly, a marketing information system can help to develop optimal competitive strategies. Since the formulation of strategy involves the process of visualizing future, management of goals, planning strategies and executive and regulatory tactics. In other words, formulation of strategy is a process through which the objectives, goals and micro and macro marketing strategies are defined in a

strategies and tactics that are exploited by companies to offer their services and products to influence target customer purchasing decisions (Beheshtian Ardakani & Fathian, 2017).

2. Marketing information system:

Nowadays, database is an important part of the most marketing information systems. A marketing database is a system in which marketing data files are organized and stored. Marketing information system has developed via data collection through the process of creating data by close communication with customers. There are four common market information systems that companies enjoy to keep up-to-date themselves with market developments (Rábová, 2015).

- Marketing database; designing marketing database needs considering several basic issues to enjoy customer information in most favorable way: The cost of data collection, the economic benefits of using these data, the ability to update this information and rapid advancement in technology that make possible maximize profits (Silva et al, 2016).

- Competitive information systems; Competitive information is a moral systematic technique to collect and analyze information about competitors' activities and business changes. The most important resources related to competitive information are annual and corporate financial reports, directors' lecture, government documents, online database, etc. (Sadeghi et al, 2011).

- Specific systems for customer contact; today, there are multiple low cost applications in developed countries that make update the information related to name and profile

hand, domestic brands in this field are also growing. Consequently, small dermo-cosmetic businesses need to formulate clever marketing strategy. Not only, this strategy must compete with new rivals, but also contain a plan to lead dermo-cosmetic products in market. Therefore, marketing branch management should identify market and effective strategies through marketing information such as customer identification, rating certain customers, classification by using transactional data during the time and realizing what customers purchase through the marketing information system (Haghighi et al., 2017). To this end, researcher aims to study certain strategies in Zharf Koushafarin cosmetics trading company, which was founded in 2009, and is now cooperating with Dermolift and Rozalia in the field of skin and hair products and working with dermatologists and pharmacies of Tehran city in sales department, using views of managers, experts, and employees of company and applying the structural equation modeling technique to answer the question whether marketing information systems influence formulation of competitive strategies with the role of cultural strategies?

For this purpose, the key concepts of the study must be defined:

1. Marketing:

There are different definitions of marketing, but the most common definition is: "marketing is to provide customer satisfaction while making a profit."

In easy language, the actions conducted by company that make customer do activities that lead to more profits. Marketing includes the

management tool by which the nature and the main concept of an organization, macro orientation or appropriate strategy and the maps for implementation of certain strategies and achieving long-term results are determined (Queen et al, 2016).

5. Types of Strategic Trends:

- Market orientation; this is one of the aspects of organizational culture in which employees place emphasis on business profitability and retention of customers through creation of superior value. Market-orientation is a kind of behavioral norm which has spread throughout the organization and satisfies customer's future and current needs through the innovation. Market-oriented organization consists of a competitive advantage in quick response to market and customer needs; and also act effectively in response to opportunities and barriers of market (Slater, 2001).

- Technology orientation; tendency to technology refers to perception of management in applying technology. In fact, some managers attempt to focus on innovative technologies, but some emphasize on other competitive aspects of organization. Those companies that rely on technology, they usually try to improve their competency through monitoring market technology as well as competitors' (Lafferty et al, 2001).

- Tendency to reduce costs; Tendency to reduce costs is achieved by cost leadership strategy. Cost leadership strategy sets out to obtain the place of low cost producer in industry by preventing waste of resources and taking advantage of experience, leading towards their own share in market (Timmers, 2000). This strategy attempts to earn higher return and competitive advantages compared with competitors (Porter, 1980).

6. Levels of strategy formulation:

of employers, as well as the various calls made them; therefore, more enterprises that have direct sale use such these systems (Isaei & Bagheri, 2014).

3. Strategy:

Strategy is the art of creating value. It provides the intellectual frameworks, conceptual models and governing ideas. Strategy allows a company's manager to identify opportunities to creating values to customers and achievement values to bring profit; in this respect, organizations define their business and link it only with resources that really matter in today's economy (Hamidzadeh, 2014:5). Strategy encompasses "strategic planning" and "strategic thinking". In fact, these approaches represent two different schools so that strategic planning concerns the "planning" school, in which strategy formulation is a formal and systematic process; strategic thinking refers to "learning" school, in which the formation of a strategy is a developmental process during implementation (Ghafarian, 2005: 16). Currently, managers enjoy strategy as a valuable tool for illustrating and mapping future directions of changes and environmental disturbances (Poister & Streib, 2009, 310).

4. Strategic planning:

A strategic plan is a framework for implementation of strategic thinking and conducting operations, resulting in specific outcomes. Such this framework has seven distinct elements: mission of organization, strategic analysis, strategy, long-term objectives, consolidated plans, financial forecasting, and executive summary. Although each of the elements develops independently, there is an internal relationship between them. These elements bring together a

words, it is a set of shared assumptions and beliefs among the members of the organization that guides appropriate behavior for various situations and activities of the organization; and finally, Organizational culture is defined as a system that shares common concepts between individuals of organization (Duckett and Macfarlane, 2013).

8. Competitive Advantage: there some definitions as follow:

- Competitive Advantage refers to specifically differentiated attributes between the companies that enable them to provide better services to customers, or superior values that rivals cannot afford to match (Grant, 1991).
- Competitive Advantage involves values that companies offer to customers so that these values are superior to customers' costs (Porter, 1996).
- Competitive Advantage aims at increasingly attractiveness of company's offerings in comparison with rivals' (Chiquan, 2001, 23).

Based on the above mentioned descriptions about competitive advantage, there is a direct relationship between the customer's desired values, company's values, and values offered by rivals of the company that determine requirements of competitive advantage. Comparing the company's values with those values provided by his rivals, it is said that the company has competitive advantage in products and services that are more desirable to customers than that of any other rivals. So that the company uses a differentiation to win a competitive edge over rivals (Mehri, 2003).

In a research by Hax and Majluf (1996) three levels of strategy in organization are defined as: corporate level, business level, and functional level. Business level deals with decisions that influence the whole organization. Managers who work at lower level they should see the whole picture rather than the particular, because they do not have usually a proper vision to make decisions in the case of profitably his respective sector and the whole organization. So, top managers are in charge of formulation the strategies. The business strategy targets superior financial performance to find a competitive position in comparison with competitors. Business managers must design and implement strategic planning in line with general directions of organization. Not only, the functional strategies respond to functional needs planned by organizational business strategies, but also constitute a collection of capabilities required for improvement of organizational competencies. Rezaian (2015) classified human resources strategies of the organization in the field of functional strategies (Rezaian et al, 2015).

7. Cultural strategy:

Culture plays a different role in an organization. Firstly, culture defines all organizational roles. Second, culture injects a sense of identity to the body of organization. Third, the culture creates a commitment towards the interests of organization rather than personal profit. Forth, Culture creates the stability of the social system. And finally, it is considered as a control factor (Hayat et al, 2011). Organizational culture is the philosophy that guides the organization's policies and members and customers' behavior. In other

- 4.
5. Does outputs of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies?
6. Does information technology of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies?
7. Do cultural strategies influence the competitive strategies?
8. Does marketing information system influence the competitive strategy?

Hypotheses of the research:

1. Time access to data of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.
2. Content access to data of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.
3. Form of the access to data of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.
4. Outputs of the marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies.
5. Information technology of marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.
6. Cultural strategies influence the competitive strategies.
7. Marketing information system influences the competitive strategy.

The main body

Kolmogorov-smirnov test was applied to study compliance of quantitative data distribution.

Based on the objectives of this research and data collection, method of the research is applied research and type of research is descriptive-survey. In theoretical section of the study the library research method was used, and in statistical data section the field study (questionnaire) was used. The research questionnaire contains 44 items based on Likert's five scales that are appended. In measuring reliability of the study the CVR method was used, so that the questionnaire was offered to 30 experts. Based on the ideas of these people CVR was equal to 0.46 that is more than the least CVR in the society of 30 people; therefore, the research reliability was approved. In measuring validity of the questionnaire the Cronbach's Alpha test was used which confirmed the research reliability.

The population study consisted of 500 managers of dermo-cosmetic companies from Tehran city. Size of the sample was determined by Cochran formula that was 218 individuals and sampling was done randomly. Data were analyzed by statistical test and SPSS and Smart PLS.

This research concentrates to find proper answers to the following seven questions:

1. Does time of access to data of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies?
2. Does content of access to data of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies?
3. Does form of the access to data of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies?

Table1. Result of kolmogorov-smirnov test

variable	Value of test	Sig. level
Time access to data of marketing information system	0.077	0.348
Content access to data of marketing information system	0.081	0.153
Form access to data of marketing information system	0.077	0.322
Outputs of marketing information system	0.090	0.189
marketing information system technology	0.057	0.787
Cultural strategies	0.058	0.766
Competitive strategies	0.088	0.450

Test of the research model on the basis of coefficient of factor loadings indicate that factor loading of indicators is more than 0.4 and required.

As it is represented in table1, result of the test indicates that the numbers obtained at significant are greater than 0.05 and distribution of data is normal. In the following, we study hypotheses of the research using structural equations modeling.

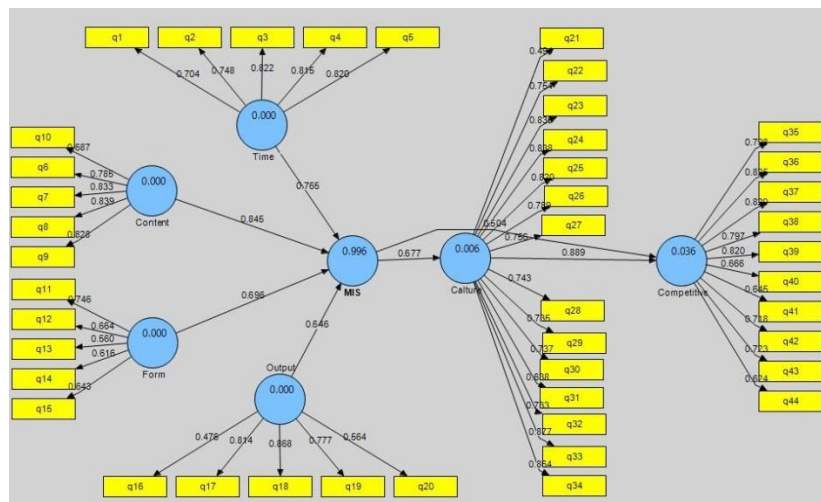


Figure1. Confirmatory factor analysis in standard estimation mode

questions are considered for structural equation modeling at significant level of 95% and there is no need to remove the questions of the model.

Test of research model on the basis of significant coefficient *t* showed that the numbers obtained are greater than 1.96. Thus, it is concluded that all of the

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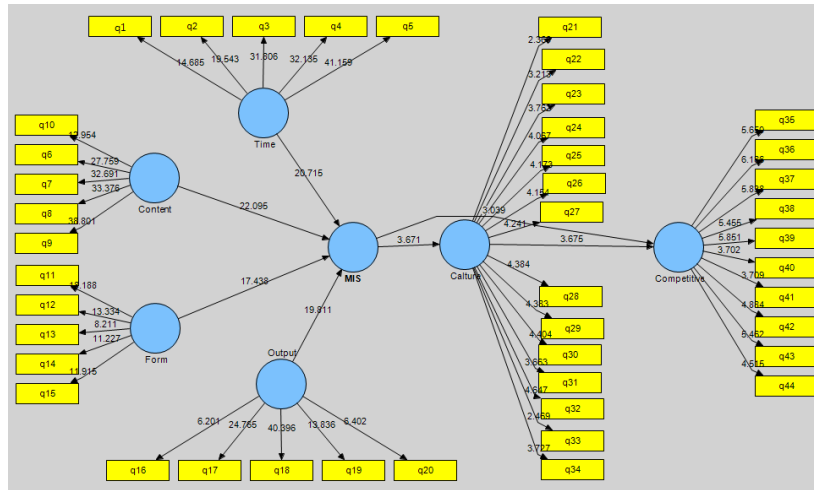


Figure2. Structural equation model in significant coefficient mode

Hypothesis1: 1. Time access to data of marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.

Table2. Analysis of first hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Time of the access to data of the marketing information system	Formulation of the cultural strategies	0.765	20.715	Accepting of hypothesis

relationship between the time access to the data of marketing information system and the formulation of cultural strategies is 20.715 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96, that is, the time access to the data of marketing information system is significant in formulation of the cultural strategies.

Hypothesis2: Content access to data of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.

Based on the figure1 and route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that time access to the data of the marketing information system with 0.765 influences formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if time access to the data of the marketing information system increases 1 unit, the value of formulation of cultural strategies increases to 76.5 with the 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining its structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%. The

Table3. Analysis of second hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
Content access to data of the marketing information system	Formulation of the cultural strategies	0.845	22.095	Accepting of hypothesis

than 0.50%. also, the relationship between content access to the data of the marketing information system and formulation of the cultural strategies is 20.095 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. As a result content access to the data of the marketing information system has a significant effect on formulation of the cultural strategies.

Hypothesis3: Form access to data of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.

Based on the figure1 and route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that content access to the data of the marketing information system 0.845 influences formulation of the cultural strategies. That is, if content access to the data of the marketing information system increases 1 unit, the value of formulation of cultural strategies increases to 84.5 with the 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater

Table4. Analysis of third hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
form access to data of the marketing information system	Formulation of the cultural strategies	0.696	17.438	Accepting of hypothesis

the relationship between the form access to the data of the marketing information system and formulation of the cultural strategies is 17.438 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. As a result form access to the data of the marketing information system has a significant effect on formulation of the cultural strategies.

Hypothesis4: Outputs of the marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural strategies.

Based on figure1 and route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that form access to the data of the marketing information system with 0.696 influences the formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if form access to the data of the marketing information system increases 1 unit, the value of the cultural strategies increases to 69.6 with 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%. Also

Table5. Analysis of forth hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
outputs of the marketing information system	Formulation of the cultural strategies	0.646	19.811	Accepting of the hypothesis

Moreover, the relationship between the outputs of the marketing information system and formulation of the cultural strategies is 19.811 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. So, outputs of the marketing information system have significant effect on formulation of the cultural strategies.

Hypothesis5: Information technology of the marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural strategies.

Based on figure1 and route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that outputs of the marketing information system with 0.646 influence the formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if outputs of the marketing information system increase 1 unit, the value of the cultural strategies increases to 64.6 with 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%.

Table6. Analysis of fifth hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
Information technology of the marketing information system	Formulation of the cultural strategies	0.677	3.671	Accepting of the hypothesis

addition, the relationship between the information technology of the marketing information system and formulation of the cultural strategies is 3.671 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the information technology of the marketing information system has a significant effect on formulation of the cultural strategies.

Hypothesis6: Cultural strategies influence the competitive strategies.

Based on figure1 and the route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that information technology of the marketing information system with 0.677 influences the formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if information technology of the marketing information system increases 1 unit, the value of the cultural strategies increases to 67.7 with 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%. In

Table7. Analysis of sixth hypothesis route from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
Cultural strategies	competitive strategies	0.889	3. 675	Accepting of the hypothesis

relationship between the cultural strategies and formulation of the cultural strategies is 3.675 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. So, cultural strategies have significant effect on competitive strategies.

Hypothesis7: the marketing information system influences the competitive strategies.

Based on figure1 and the route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that cultural strategies with 0.677 influence the formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if cultural strategies increase 1 unit, the value of the cultural strategies increases to 88.9 with 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%. Moreover, the

Table8. Analysis of the route of hypothesis7 from structural equation modeling

route		Value of the factor loading of figure1	Value of the significant coefficient of figure2	Result of the hypothesis
Independent variable	Dependent variable			
Marketing information system	competitive strategies	0.504	3. 039	Accepting of the hypothesis

Based on figure1 and the route coefficient of this hypothesis, it is concluded that the marketing information system with 0.504 influences the formulation of cultural strategies. That is, if the marketing information system increases1 unit, the value of the competitive strategies increases to 50.4 with 95 percent. Factor loadings also contain a very good quality in determining their own structure since they have a value greater than 0.50%. Moreover, the relationship between the marketing information system and formulation of the competitive strategies is 3.039 at confidence level of 95% which is greater than 1.96. Therefore, the marketing information system has a significant effect on the competitive strategies.

Conclusion

Findings indicated that time access to data of marketing information system influences the formulation of cultural and competitive strategies. In this respect, Haghghi et al. (2017) reached the similar in which high-speed internet access through reducing time access to information develops formulation of appropriate marketing strategies. Content access of marketing information system influences formulation of the cultural and competitive strategies. In this regard, Tomcik (2015) stated that in-person sales are the most successful way in selling cosmetic products. Customers obtain more information about the related promotional products through in-person sales and purchase on the basis of this information. Advertising strategies and cultural and competitive marketing should concentrate

more on the information about content. Form access in marketing information system influences formulation of the cultural and competitive strategies. Regarding this, Haghighi et al (2017) stated that online information access develops competitive strategies. Outputs of marketing information system influence the formulation of cultural and competitive. Accordingly, Hosseini Brenti and Sadeghi (2014) said that today managers need more information in doing their own responsibilities since the information is considered as a source of power that enhances the competitive power of organizations. Meanwhile, the way of gathering, storing, processing, and reporting (output) of this information is very important. Information technology (IT) in marketing information system influences formulation of the competitive and cultural strategic. Azad and Sharifi (2012) said that lack of information and old-fashioned facilities, computer equipment, and information technology infrastructure are the major weaknesses of marketing in large and medium-sized companies of Iran's food industry.

The most important limitations of this study were:

1. Lack of accessible scientific resources: there are very limited scientific resources (at least in Persian) in this field that directly relates to the subject of study. For this reason, I need to study Latin resources that are time consuming due to time constraints for using internet in college, translating source language to target language and classifying entries.
2. Lack of similar studies in this field: however researcher tried to find studies approving the research, there was not quite related research to deal with this subject.
3. Lack of necessary funds to promote the study: research process requires financial costs which certainly student research

cannot afford for this because of certain circumstances.

4. Lack of proper cooperation of authorities and executive institutions.
5. Unreliability of responses of questionnaires by the population of research.
6. Uncertainty of respondents' common and proper understanding of questionnaire.
7. Lack of full knowledge by individuals selected from statistical population.
8. Low participation of some managers and individuals in distributing and collecting questionnaires.
9. Some questionnaires are not returned and missed and redistributing is very time consuming because of great distances of some area.

Finally, results of the research showed that competitive markets nowadays are not satisfied with local customers and compete over the trans-regional and even international markets. Therefore information plays a key role in this way. Marketing information systems classify regularly with more speed the information required by customers through information technologies. Thus, marketing information systems help formulation of optimal competitive and cultural strategies. Accordingly, there are suggestions as follow:

1. Based on the first hypothesis, it is recommended that the distinction is eliminated between the channel of internal reports and the systems that organizes information intelligently from inside and outside of the organization and protects intelligent decisions, management, and control of operations. This indicates that marketing information systems used by corporates involve limited technology.

2. Based on the second hypothesis, the information relevant to the current customers (the information such as, purchase power, credit, and macroeconomic indicators the highest and lowest accessibility, respectively) must be classified in terms of its nature and type.

3. Based on the third hypothesis, it is recommended that the companies with low –tech hardware must improve technology of their marketing information system and try to exchange information through written reports. And they should often try e-mail too.

4. Based on the fourth hypothesis, design and implementation of information of marketing should be arranged in line with needs of organizational managers and decision makers.

5. Based on the fifth hypothesis, strengthening and optimizing processes and mechanisms of organization marketing research unit, the initial channel of accessing data for preparing and transferring required information, leads into appropriate cultural strategies with products.

6. Based on the sixth hypothesis, it is suggested to improve marketing system information according to criteria of high speed and accuracy in data processing and transferring information, easy to use, high security, and flexibility to adapt to technological changes and users' needs which causes cultural strategies are of service to competitive strategies of organization.

7. Based on the seventh hypothesis, it is suggested to identify needs of marketing information system categorized based on the type of planning usage, control, providing, and updating that organize competitive strategies. Because these information are easily accessible in competition with other rivals.

Appreciation

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