Influence of Entrepreneur Traits on SME's Financial Performance: Case Study of GCC Entrepreneurs who survived during COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the influence of entrepreneur traits on SMEs performance during COVID-19. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries had increasingly seen entrepreneurship as a tool for empowering people and the key to job creation. SME's are now the driving force in providing people with new job opportunities and eradicating unemployment. This study is based on the primary data collected from the sample of entrepreneurs in GCC countries through self-managed questionnaires sent through Gmail/google forms. The data is collected from the entrepreneurs of Gulf Cooperation Council countries using a simple random sampling technique. It was difficult to contact and conduct interviewees to collect data from them, especially during this pandemic and COVID-19 lockdown; therefore, the sample is small and limited. The analysis was done using correlation and regression and some valuable conclusions were drawn which can be beneficial to the entrepreneur, HEIs and governments while making policies. The study reveals that the entrepreneur possesses specific traits that influence the process of procuring resources and improving SMEs performance during crisis/pandemic. The SME age, entrepreneur education level and ranked Higher Education Institutions influences the performance of SMEs during the COVID-19.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurs, Traits, SMEs, Firm performance, COVID-19, GCC.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), governments have temporarily begun to reopen their economies. Restaurants once again accept reservations for outdoor dining at a social distance; offices are getting busier and even border restrictions are gradually relaxing. Throughout the Gulf Cooperation Council, governments are investigating the economic impact of strong regional blockades and isolation measures. Now, they turn their attention to the future, the issue of recovery and the promotion of sustainable economic growth. Even before the paradigm-shifting effect of the Covid-19 pandemic was realized, the Gulf Cooperation Council had already experienced major turmoil. As governments in the region compete to adjust their economic structure to shift from hydrocarbons to the rapid development of the digital age, almost unprecedented economic diversification efforts are already underway. Forward-looking regulations designed to encourage innovation and the localization of emerging digital trends are being introduced to suit our unique needs in the Gulf Cooperation Council. With the growth and attractiveness of emerging enterprises, large enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, it has gradually become the focus of

the entire region's strategy of building an ecosystem of technologies and emerging enterprises from scratch, and the focus has gradually shifted to small enterprises.

Take Saudi Arabia as an example. Today, Saudi Arabia's small and medium-sized enterprises account for an astonishing 99% of the total number of enterprises and provide 64% of Saudi Arabia's total employment. According to the "Saudi Vision 2030", the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia plans to increase the contribution rate of SMEs from the current 20% of GDP to 35% by facilitating SMEs to obtain funds and encouraging financial institutions to allocate up to 20% of total loans to them. . Looking at the UAE, last year the Ministry of Economy estimated that the SME sector accounted for more than 98% of the total number of UAE companies and about 52% of the non-oil gross domestic product (GDP). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs hopes to increase this number to 60% by 2021. In Bahrain, SMEs have also proven to be an important pillar of the economic diversification strategy, and have played an important role in job creation, and are increasingly becoming important contributors. This prompted the Cabinet to decide recently to increase public spending in the sector. No wonder small and medium enterprises have become the center of an unprecedented support package across the region to mitigate the impact of Covid-19.

This is done in the context of a surge in business registration throughout the region, which has surged by three digits in recent months, and the district's tender committee awarded tens of millions of dollars in contracts to these companies. In June alone, the number of business registrations in Bahrain soared by 109%. In other words, the government's support for most of the GCC's major economies is already a priority area has doubled, and what we are seeing now is: Encouraged by a new round of entrepreneurs and businessmen, small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups "boom during these uncertain times, the government supports small businesses. The government must not relax. They correctly identified start-ups and small and medium enterprises as the main drivers of sustainable economic diversification. Now, small businesses will also become the engine of recovery in the Gulf region after the blockade. In this situation procuring capital or other resources is one of the biggest challenges facing small and medium enterprises in the world, but this is especially true for the Middle East and North Africa, where nearly 63% of SMEs cannot obtain financing. SMEs are committed to integrating economic welfare and business logic as the core (Khan, M. A., 2019)[1].

Resource providers to early-stage entrepreneurs usually check all aspects of entrepreneurs and their views on execution capabilities. This means that resource providers must consider not only the quality of entrepreneurs but also the suitability between the two. While assessing the early stage SMEs the beneficiaries lack objective about entrepreneur's potential success, because there is not much public information. Besides, the quality performance of the entrepreneurs, there is no standardized standard for assessing them as they are being driven by motivation and compassion for success. Therefore, resource providers must rely heavily on the traits of the entrepreneur, which is seen as a general change in the basic quality of SME. Therefore, the information used in this study is irregular and uses theory to link the traits of the entrepreneur with his capabilities in resource procurement and its effects on SME performance.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

A crisis is one of threats to the existence and performance of a business (Boin, 2009)[2]; (Comfort, 2002)[3]; (Williams, Gruber, Sutcliffe, Shepherd, & Zhao, 2017)[4]. Likewise, COVID-19 which is currently happening has become a real threat and challenge to the business world not only in certain regions but all entrepreneurs globally. The training, education and character is the basis of resilience that will lead to the success of an entrepreneur and organization (Fisher, Maritz, & Lobo, 2016)[5], (Wong, Cheung, & Venuvinod, 2005)[6], (Ludmila Kozubikova, Jaroslav Belas, Yuriy Bilan, 2015)[7], (Barazandeh, Parvizian, Alizadeh, & Khosravi, 2015)[8], (Khan & Al Mamari, 2019)[9]. Individual traits will be the basic capital of entrepreneurial competence that is very important for someone in developing and maintaining a business in all situations they face (Sánchez, 2012)[10], (Ahmed, Kar, & Ahmed, 2018)[11], (Khan & Al Mamari, 2019)[9].

The (Khan & Al Mamari, 2019)[9] validated that there is a strong relationship between organizational learning and employee productivity in the Gulf Cooperation Council. (Khan M. A., 2019)[1] pointed out that only a few entrepreneurial researchers are interested in feminist epistemology. It is disappointing that the higher-level understanding of feminism in sociology and political literature is not reflected in the realm of entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate dynamics, such as government roles, entrepreneur training, role models, and demographic traits, to have a more comprehensive understanding of their impact methods, to ensure a more accurate assessment of the development results of the entrepreneurs in the Middle East and Africa North Africa (Khan M., 2015)[12]. The study (Khan M. A., 2019)[1] aimed to investigate the motivations for encouraging people to embrace entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa, such as government roles, entrepreneur training, role models, and demographic traits.

(Khan M. A., 2011)[13] believes that entrepreneurship is the only real job creator that can contribute to the non-oil GDP of the Gulf countries, while (Khan M. A., 2016)[14] believes that many problems and constraints inherently hinder entrepreneurs' Growth, especially in developing countries, especially the difficulty of obtaining Planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource and existing market information. On the other hand, e-commerce has fundamentally changed the dynamics of the business environment and the way people and organizations conduct business transactions. The study (Khan M. A., 2014)[15] shows that e-commerce can enhance the potential of entrepreneurs, thereby becoming a source of competitive advantage, and is a cost-effective way to attract global customers by exploring expansion opportunities to compete with large companies, develop business and target new global markets. The (Khan M. A., 2011)[13] study suggested that specific industries like cement in Oman play an important role by contributing to the country's economic development.

The study (Khan M. A., 2016)[14] believes that SMEs play an important role in today's world economy and are recognized as one of the main contributors to economic, development and employment growth after Oman's oil sector. Therefore, SMEs cannot be ruled out, because this financial technology has a huge impact on SMEs and entrepreneurs. This study (Khan M., 2019)[16] believes that alumni embracing entrepreneurs is a basic element of economic development depends on technology. The study highlights the factors that encourage entrepreneurial attitudes among GCC alumni. They argued that the government needs to play a more meditative role in attracting alumni to join entrepreneurship and the government needs to play a more meditative role in attracting alumni to join entrepreneurship. They recommended that government and entrepreneur training are the biggest variables that encourage people to embrace entrepreneurship; however, most people do not think these institutions have to play a satisfactory role. The study (Khan, Alkathiri, Alhaddad, & Alnajjar, 2021)[17], (Khan M. A., 2016)[14] validates that the possibility of entrepreneurs obtaining resources from providers is significantly affected by the availability of such resources in the market. This can be observed and the cost of obtaining is high. Specifically, we focus on the availability of capital of an entrepreneur who has initial ideas and initiates founding activities (Khan M. A., 2016)[14] and founding teams. Resource providers may pay attention to their background in the selection process of an entrepreneur because the traits of the entrepreneur have a significant impact on the future survival rate of SME and performance. The organizational productivity can be enhanced by training and learning (Khan & Al Mamari, 2019)[9] which pave the way for the future success of an organization.

3. HYPOTHESIS FRAMED ON TRAITS OF AN ENTREPRENEUR AND ITS EFFECT ON RESOURCE PROCUREMENT

- **Hypothesis 1:** Entrepreneurs are better able to access resources.
- **Hypothesis 2:** During the crisis/pandemic, the education level of entrepreneurs has a significant influence on the purchase of resources.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Entrepreneurs educated from ranked higher education institutions had a significant influence on the purchase of resources during the crisis/pandemic.
- **Hypothesis 4:** The functional diversity of entrepreneurs has a significant influence on the purchase of resources during the crisis/pandemic.

- **Hypothesis 5:** The experience of entrepreneurs in related industries had a significant influence on resource procurement during the crisis/pandemic.
- **Hypothesis 6:** The traits of entrepreneurs mediate the company's resource procurement process, which leads to better performance of SME.

4. METHODOLOGY: SAMPLE AND DATA

This study focuses on entrepreneurs who run SME during the pandemic. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data can only be collected through online surveys conducted through Google Forms. The entrepreneurs were identified from the websites of different countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. 1500 entrepreneur have been contacted by phone or email; they have stated the purpose of the study and have been asked to participate in the survey. Then, the electronic survey link was distributed via email to a total of 1170 entrepreneur who expressed interest and finally received 880 responses. Unfortunately, due to its incompleteness, 160 responses were excluded from the statistical analysis.

4.1 Variables: Dependent Variable- SME performance

This measure includes activities related to how to solve SME tasks, the degree to which entrepreneurs fulfill financial responsibilities, the degree to which an SME's performance evaluation system is established, and how to achieve these goals well. It uses a 5-point Likert scale for measurement. Average the scores of these items to get the SME's performance score. The dependent variable "SME performance" was measured according to the method of each SME interviewee. Due to the lack of reliable objective data, a subjective evaluation of the performance of entrepreneurs has been carried out. Since entrepreneurs refuse to share data on the performance of their SMEs, this data does not apply to this article. However the close relationship between biased and unbiased SME performance is validated (Khan & Alam, 2019)[19]. These results can also be applied to other SME's performance.

4.2 Independent Variables

- **Entrepreneur age:** The age of entrepreneur depends on when the resource holder provides resources.
- **Education Level:** Higher education is defined as a master's degree or higher. If the education level of an entrepreneur is higher than graduate school, it is marked as 1; and if it is lower than university, it is written as 0.
- **Ranked Higher Education Institutions:** Taking into account the situation of the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, higher education institutions in the entire region are measured according to the "ranking of higher education institutions". According to the QS ranking, the institution ranks among the top 1,000 Arab higher education institutions. This is because it is judged that the scale of networks based on them will be very different. If the entrepreneur graduated from one or more of the four HEIs, it is marked as1, otherwise it is 0.
- **Functional diversity:** Determine whether the functional diversification of entrepreneur is an output function. For the background of output functions, it is marked as1, and for the background of throughput or additional functions, it is marked as0.
- **Relevant industry experience:** If the entrepreneur has relevant experience in dealing with the existing or potential domestic and foreign customers, suppliers, competitors then he is marked as 1.

4.3 Mediating Variable

Resource procurement: Resources can be related to financial, human resource or market or sales support. However, in this study, there are several variables, which are classified into three different categories according to the traits and relevance: financial; leadership and marketing. The survey is designed to use a 5-point Likert scale for measurement.

Control variables: The control variables included in this study are the age of SME, establishment, the scale of business and type of industry.

- **Age of SME:** The age of SME is counted from the date of establishment/incorporation of SMEs, to control differences caused to SMEs in their development stages.
- **SME's Establishment:** The establishment of SME independently or through mergers may provide important initial support and resources to an SME.
- **SME scale of Business:** SME scale of business is used to explain that the larger the scale, the more the resources required by an entrepreneur.

Industry traits: The industry to which SME belongs Agri, Manufacturing and Service is regarded as a dummy variable.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This is a quantitative research study using primary data collected through a self-structured questionnaire with close-ended questions. The measurement scale used is an interval scale due to the added benefit of the magnitude of ranking and the suitable method of scaling adopted is the Likert Scale. To determine the reliability and validity, the Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated. To establish the validity, exploratory factor analysis was performed. To test the hypotheses, correlation and regression analysis were used. The total respondents for the study were 880 and a total of 1170 entrepreneurs from GCC participated in this survey. The structured questionnaire was distributed among the 1170 entrepreneurs out of which total 1040 responses were received but unfortunately, due to its incompleteness, 160 responses were excluded from the statistical analysis.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics:

The descriptive statistics explained the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of the data. It has been finding that the sample size for this research was 880 (N). As the data were managed at 5-point Likert Scale, therefore, the minimum value was 1 and the maximum value was 5. The mean value was greater than 3 along with a standard deviation greater than 1, these findings revealed that the data is positively skewed. These findings showed that the data for this study is appropriate and can be used for the further analysis of hypotheses testing.

5.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses, it was mandatory to analyze the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. To determine the reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated. There are many variables in this study but the reliability for all was greater than 0.70. These findings showed that question items are appropriately converging on their relevant variable and can be used for the model testing.

6. RESULTS

The majority of SMEs (92%) have the number of employee's ≥ 50. Tables 1A and 1B show the correlation between variables. While analyzing the control variables, the age of SMEs can play an important role in harming the performance. To test hypotheses 1-5, a series of **multiple regression analyses** were performed. Table 2 shows the analysis results. The results show that among independent variables, age, education level and ranking of HEI are only significantly correlated with efficiency in acquiring substantial financial assistance during pandemic/crisis. On the other hand, there is no significant correlation with the effective leadership of SMEs. But the independent variables like SME age and education from ranked HEIs have a lot to do with the marketing expertise. In the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, entrepreneurs are more capable of acquiring sufficient financial resource and marketing their ventures during the crisis/pandemic. Entrepreneurs of SMEs are more efficient in obtaining the financial resources and marketing their SMEs, but they have nothing to do with effective leadership assistance. The education of an entrepreneur has a significant influence on the procurement of financial resources but has nothing to do with effective leadership and market expertise. However, entrepreneur educated by top-ranked higher education institutions have a significant influence on the procurement of financial and market resources but have nothing to do with effective leadership. Therefore, hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 are partially supported.

TABLE 1A: Shows the descriptive statistics and correlations

	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Age of the SMEs	5.39	4.77							
2	SMEs Establishment	1.82	1.07	.355**						
3	SMEs Scale of Business	25.07	19.95	0.013	0.165					

4	Manufacturing	0.33	1	-0.118	-0.127	-0.088				
5	Service	0.54	0.6	0.035	-0.044	-0.146	-0.340			
6	Agri	0.24	0.43	0.047	.223^{+}	.327**	-0.174	-.584**		
7	Entrepreneur Age	37.46	0.35	0.123	0.017	-0.027	0.109	0.020	0.114	
8	Education Level	0.67	0.24	0.182	-0.024	0.019	0.193	-0.019	-0.20	0.102
9	Ranked HEIs	0.75	0.22	-0.129	-0.119	-0.12	0.127	0.019	-0.102	0.006
10	Functional diversity	0.44	..20	-0.114	0.018	0.119	-0.019	-0.22	0.120	-0.3
11	Related experience	0.22	0.25	-0.119	-0.103	0.127	0.053	-0.114	0.020	-0.120
12	Planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource	2.03	.1.27	0.067	-0.047	0.119	0.02	0.104	-0.084	-0.124
13	Effective Leadership	2.65	1.57	-0.004	0.009	.325**	-0.082	-.209^{+}	0.182	-0.20
14	Marketing expertise	2.07	1.42	-0.127	-0.14	0.163	0.096	-0.134	0.040	-0.133
15	Entrepreneurial SME performance	2.13	1.43	-.227*	-0.20	0.197	-0.022	-0.09	0.025	.020**
n = 73, + p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01										

TABLE 1B: Shows the descriptive statistics and correlations

	Variables	Mean	SD	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Age of the SMEs	5.39	4.77							
2	SMEs Establishment	1.82	1.07							
3	SMEs Scale	25.2	20							
4	Manufacturing	0.33	1							
5	Service	0.54	0.6							
6	Agri	0.24	0.43							
7	Entrepreneur Age	37.6	0.35							
8	Education Level	0.67	0.24							
9	Ranked HEIs	0.75	0.22	-0.124						
10	Functional diversity	0.44	..20	0.102	0.016					
11	Related experience	0.22	0.25	0.020	0.014	0.144				
12	Planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource	2.03	.1.27	.024**	.093**	.109+	0.13			
13	Effective Leadership	2.65	1.57	0.184	0.033	-0.15	0.04	-.209^{+}		
14	Marketing expertise	2.07	1.42	0.033	.020**	-0.13	0.2	0.754	.643**	
15	Entrepreneurial SME performance	2.13	1.43	-0.27	0.002*	0.018	0.13	-.030*	0.218	0.3
n = 73, + p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01										

TABLE 2: Results 1

Dependent Variable	**Planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource**	**Effective Leadership**	**Marketing expertise**
Control			
SMEs age	0.103	0.026	-0.019
SMEs Establishment	-0.162	-0.035	-0.105

SMEs scale	0.039	0.206*	0.123
Manufacturing	0.12	-0.108	0.025
Service	0.218*	-0.123	0.022
Independent Variable			
Entrepreneur Age	-232**	-0.045	-0.172+
Educational level	0.202*	0.076	0.123
Ranked HEIs	0.412**	-0.002	0.320**
Functional diversity	0.032	0.012	0.012
Related experience	0.120	0.126	0.102
Adj. R^2	0.390	0.093	0.259
F	6.523**	1.931+	4.022**
n = 73, + p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01			

To test the influence of mediation, this study used the four phases to establish mediation. Phase 1 requires that the independent variable is significantly related to the dependent variable; Phase 2 requires that the independent variable has an important relationship with the mediator; Phase 3 requires the mediator to influence the dependent variable while controlling the influence of the independent variable. Finally, when these conditions are met, when phase 4 requires the controlling mediator to instruct to complete the mediation, the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable is not obvious. Otherwise, partial mediation will be instructed. The mediating effect has the following correlation: Y = cX + e1(1) M = aX + e2(2) Y = c'X + bM + e3(3) Y: dependent variable, X: independent variable, M: intermediate variable.

TABLE 3: RESULT 2

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Control			
SMEs age	-0.108+	-0.174	-0.204
SMEs Incorporation	-0.208*	-0.311*	-0.271**
SMEs scale	0.20	0.224	0.193
Manufacturing	-0.117	-0.082	-0.142
Service	-0.102	-0.036	-0.106
Independent Variable			
Entrepreneur Age	-0.257*	-0.345**	-0.245**
Educational level	-0.226+	-0.189	-0.283**
Ranked HEIs	0.249*	0.43**	0.227**
Functional diversity			
Related experience		-0.298+	
Adj. R^2			-0.093
F	0.160	0.209	0.150
Control	2.702*	2.929**	2.382*
n = 73, + p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01			

Table 3 shows the analysis results of Hypothesis 6: To test the effect of mediation the models were tested using the correlation between the traits of entrepreneurs and SME performance; where all the traits of entrepreneurs are important, like age and high ranking HEI are positively correlated with SME performance, while education level is contrary to the hypothesis and has negative significance. As a result, among the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, the advanced age and high ranking HEI contribute to the performance of SME. However, the level of education seems to weaken the performance of SME. Financial and Marketing expertise plays an important role. In the third

and fourth steps of the intermediary analysis, the SME's performance was regressed according to independent variables, planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource or marketing expertise, and control variables. Model 2 shows that the significant correlation between age and ranking HEI (β= .257, p <.05; β= .249, p <.05) becomes stronger (β= .345, p <.01; β= .421 (p <.01), and then enter the financial aid into the partial mediation equation (β= -.298, p <.10). Further the results show that the mediation effect is contrary to our expectations and when financial assistance is fully integrated into the intermediary equation (β=-.298, p <.10), the significant correlation of education level (β=-.226, p <.10) becomes irrelevant. Further, the model 3 shows that marketing expertise is meaningless and it was validated by Sobel's test (in all significant cases, P <.05). As a result, the various traits of entrepreneur reduced SME performance by providing financial support, which was contrary to my expectations, but they did not contribute to SME performance by providing marketing help. Hypothesis 6 is not supported. The conclusion section proposes more explanations and explanations.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The model I tested summarizes that the information used in this research is irregular, so it uses theory to link the traits of entrepreneurs with resource procurement and SME performance. The first research question is, what traits of an entrepreneur help to obtain certain types of resources? The answer is that first the well-educated entrepreneurs especially from ranked HEI's are actively planning and acquiring sufficient financial resource during COVID-19, they have very effective marketing expertise, but the traits they possess has nothing to do with their effective leadership which is common with other entrepreneurs. Second, the education of entrepreneurs has a significant influence on the procurement of financial resources but has nothing to do with effective leadership and market assistance. Third, entrepreneurs educated by top universities have a positive influence on the procurement of financial and market resources, but they have nothing to do with effective leadership. The second research question is which types of resources can mediate the correlation between the traits of an entrepreneur and SME performance. As a result, among the GCC member states, entrepreneur educated from HEI's which are ranked influences the performance of SMEs, but in case the entrepreneur education level is low then it may affect the decision making and in return will influence the performance of SME's. These traits of entrepreneurs are contrary to the expectations as they are capable of influencing the performance of SMEs. The governments of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have promoted relevant policies to assist entrepreneurs, who can eradicate unemployment. As long as certain conditions are met, the governments of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries will support entrepreneurs and SMEs depending on their business viability.

In this case, despite the lack of the ability to create value and good performance, many entrepreneurs have obtained certification; to establish SMEs in the short term and the governments of all the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have directly or indirectly assisted. But a few entrepreneurs have survived who are exceptional and possess different traits that guides and helps them in keeping their SMEs survive during the COVID-19. Although effective leadership does not help the SME's short-term performance, they are of strategic importance in creating value. Therefore, little effective leadership is the key issue, and these challenges challenge the SME ecology of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. In the future, we will study how SMEs in the form of semi-market research or case studies can cooperate with other organizations to overcome these challenges. This research is based on the conceptual model of (Khan M. A., 2019)[1], in which a resource-based perspective is systematically applied to entrepreneurs to clarify the correlation between entrepreneur traits, resource conditions, and competitive advantage. Considering that for-profit companies and SMEs have different focuses, we hope these correlations will be different. This research is based on the conceptual model of (Khan M. A., 2019)[1], in which a resource-based perspective is systematically applied to entrepreneurs to clarify the correlation between entrepreneur traits, resource conditions, and competitive advantage. Considering that for-profit companies and SMEs have different priorities, we hope these correlations will be different. (Khan, Mohammed Aref, & Farooque, 2020)[19] validates the results of this study which shows that the traits and resource types of entrepreneurs are important for creating value. Most of the existing management research on the traits of entrepreneurs is under exploration. The role of strategic alliances in international business includes large companies whose main purpose is to improve the bottom line of the economy (Khan M. A.,

2014)[15]. Previous studies on entrepreneurs that create value usually focus on non-profit entrepreneurs and their partnerships with individual companies or government entities, or three-sector partnerships through case studies or narratives. Entrepreneurship research in this area has studied entire networks and how they affect entrepreneurs. In this study, the influence of the influence and resource procurement by entrepreneurs of SME was studied. Therefore, this research can better understand the trait framework of entrepreneurs, including many traits of entrepreneurs and various resources operated by SME.

Finally, this research attempts to apply the resource-based view model to the new SME. This suggests that in this case, future research should use resource-based view models and other mainstream theories. The findings of this study also have important implications for decision-makers or practitioners. Among the many support from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, effective leadership helps foster the value of new SMEs. However, despite the contributions of this research, it still has some limitations. First, the sample size is low. To conduct an empirical analysis of this research, we contacted many entrepreneurs from Gulf Cooperation Council countries via email. However, despite our best efforts to obtain sample data, we did not obtain enough data. However, until recently, SME research in the field of effective leadership focused on defining the concept of entrepreneurs and evaluating SME through narratives and case studies. This research has contributed to the growing quantitative empirical research in this field and demonstrated that it is feasible to conduct a large-scale analysis of SME. Second, this study did not cover the performance of economic companies. The economic performance is as important as the SME's performance. However, the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have promoted related policies to create job opportunities and an SME merger system. Finally, (Khan & Alam, 2019)[18] confirmed the close relationship between subjective performance and objective performance of an SME. However, since the measurement of perception is controversial, future research needs to develop variables to obtain objective data.

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