

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## ARE COMPETENCIES OF AN ENTREPRENEUR DETERMINANT OF SUCCESS IN A CONFLICT ZONE: AN EVIDENCE FROM CONFLICT ZONE KASHMIR

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## ABSTRACT

Exploring and understanding entrepreneurship in a conflict zone has been one of the concerns in entrepreneurship research. Responding to the concerns of multiple authors about providing empirical evidence from places under conflict, we present the findings relating entrepreneur and success in a conflict zone Kashmir. The study undertaken explores the impact of entrepreneurial competencies which include strategic, conceptual and commitment competencies on entrepreneurial success in a conflict zone. The findings of the current study reveal that competencies play a substantial role in achieving success in a conflict zone. Upon the analysis of data, we found that the hypothesized significant positive relationship of strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies with success was proven correct. Among the analyzed competencies, strategic competencies had the highest impact on success. Using Smart-PLS for analysis of data, we found that the theoretical model relating competencies and success was found to have a high predictive accuracy and relevance. The results of the study are expected to provide insights to the entrepreneurs, governments, and other stakeholders in a conflict zone. Especially, the institutions which impart entrepreneurship education and training in a conflict zone are provided with empirical evidence that competencies are an important asset for the successful entrepreneurial outcome. Because competencies are learnable, observable and therefore could be enhanced, as such special considerations should be given to entrepreneurial competencies.

## KEYWORDS

entrepreneurship, smart-pls, stakeholders, hypothesized

### 1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The studies in entrepreneurship research have generally taken place in relatively stable contexts and experts are of the opinion that research studies involving conflict zone entrepreneurship are scarce (Brück et al., 2013; Shah and Lala, 2021; Shaza et al., 2018). In addition to this, it has been found that empirical research work, particularly, from conflict zones is largely understated. A group researchers noted that "there is a critical need for empirical data from the relevant affected states under conflict (Shaza et al., 2018). Most literature depends on published households' surveys based on secondary data. Without sufficient empirical research, both theory and practice may lapse in understanding the dynamics and magnitude of entrepreneurship in varying unique contexts" (Shaza et al., 2018; Desai, 2011). In conflict zones researchers face multiple challenges such as constant threat to life, mistrust among the community members, resentment to share information, absence of theories and insufficient data which results in the scarcity of research in such settings (Brück et al., 2013; Bullough et al., 2014; Lemmon, 2012; Naudé, 2007b; Shah and Lala, 2021).

Insecurity to lives, continued disruptions to commercial activities, violence in terms of physical and psychological harm, lack of good governance, and destruction of infrastructure etc. prove devastating to entrepreneurship (Roberts, 2010). But it is also a fact that "businesses play an important role in societies in conflict, contributing to trajectories of continued conflict or transitioning out of conflict". In developed countries that are relatively stable, entrepreneurship acts a substantial contributor towards growth, employment generation and prosperity. Similarly in conflict zones, the potential of entrepreneurship as a contributor towards

progress and development and its critical role in employment generation and dispersion of products and services to the population living in conflict cannot be ignored (Desai, 2011). The need for and importance of creating entrepreneurial environment and sustaining entrepreneurship in conflict zones, researchers seek to explore the factors that increase possibilities of successes and avoid failures (Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010).

As per the expert's entrepreneur as an individual is synonymous to the venture he establishes especially in SME's. The outcome of entrepreneurial efforts largely depends on entrepreneur's decisions which are reflection of his characteristics. In lieu of this, we investigated the role of strategic, conceptual and commitment competencies in entrepreneurial success of entrepreneurs in conflict zone context. The setting for this research study is Indian administered Kashmir, a longstanding political conflict between People of Jammu and Kashmir, Union of India and Pakistan.

### 2. KASHMIR A CONFLICT

Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory for which United Nations in its resolutions of 21st April, 1948 asked India and Pakistan to resolve the dispute on the basis of free and impartial plebiscite in which people of Jammu and Kashmir would decide their future (UN Security Council, 1948). This political conflict started in 1947 and is continuing till date. The conflict turned violent when people of Jammu and Kashmir started an armed struggle against India in 1989. "Violent conflict entails the systematic use of armed violence for criminal and/or political objectives; it is well known to have devastating impacts on well-being and development" (Brück et al., 2013). In Kashmir valley, where the conflict is

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primarily concentrated, it lead to the loss of lives and destruction of infrastructure. In 2006 UN Human Rights Watch reported, “most Kashmiri families have lost a relative, friend, or neighbour in the violence” (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

This ongoing conflict not only impacted the lives, but businesses also faced a huge setback. The conflict in Kashmir presents itself in multiple faces sometimes it is in the form of armed conflict and sometimes public uprising against Indian state. In all cases it renders huge loses to the economy of the region. Bhat describes Kashmir conflict as “one of the most longstanding and intractable conflict between India and Pakistan (over Kashmir) and between India and the people of Jammu and Kashmir (in Kashmir) (Bhat, 2019). The dynamic nature of the conflict affects the lives of millions of people across political, social, economic and cultural spheres” (Bhat, 2019). Shutdowns that are observed frequently, blockade of internet for months at a stretch, violence that destroys both properties and lives and border tensions have a devastating impact on the overall economy and businesses in Kashmir. Malik claimed that the losses incurred just because of frequent internet blackout by the government agencies lead to the losses amounting to 4000 crores between 2012 and 2017 (Malik, 2018).

A study by the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry revealed that, after removal of special status through abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, Government of India shut down the Valley for more than 5 months continuously that dented the economy of the region and lead to losses amounting to Rupees17878 crore (KCCI, 2020). Political, psychological and economic turmoil has proven to be devastating for the entrepreneurship development in Jammu and Kashmir (Bodha, 2017). Despite all odds due to the conflict, the presence of 500,000 establishments which are involved in economic activity in Kashmir is a sign of entrepreneurial spirit of people (GoI, 2015). Though the rate of closures of businesses is high but the stories of success also prevail. The current study is aimed to explore the role of select entrepreneurial competencies in achieving entrepreneurial success in Kashmir region.

**3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Experts argue that entrepreneurship acts an agent in transformation of societies under conflict, while it may lead to economic prosperity and stability, consequently, entrepreneurship may also lead societies out of conflict (Desai, 2011). Despite the challenges faced in conflict zones, entrepreneurs struggle and strive depicting the spirit of entrepreneurship (Desai, 2011; Naudé, 2007b). Though, survival and growth of entrepreneurship is hampered by conflict and rate of failures is high however entrepreneurship continues to take place in such situations and there are evidence of successful entrepreneurial pursuits also (Shah and Lala, 2021). Entrepreneurship academia, while seeking answers to the question as to what makes some entrepreneurs successful when others fail, has conducted multiple studies. However, a plethora of such research has been conducted in relatively stable contexts (Ahmad, 2007a; Chandler and Jansen, 1992; Georgellis et al., 2000; Khan et al., 2018; Man et al., 2008; Mc Clelland, 1987; Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010; Serarols-Tarrés et al., 2006; Sorensen and Chang, 2011; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020). Research seeking determinants of success in a conflict-zone has not been given much consideration so far (Desai, 2011; Shah and Lala, 2021; Shaza et al., 2018).

Success is an outcome of multiple determinants such as organization, environment and entrepreneur himself. While other determinants of success hold their own importance, entrepreneur holds the centerstage for experts. Previous research relating entrepreneur and performance, in relatively stable contexts, revealed that firm performance is significantly impacted by the entrepreneur. Multiple factors impacting firm performance, such as individual traits, personality factors and competencies etc. have been identified by the researchers when analysis is done at the level of entrepreneur (Begley and Boyd, 1987; Bird, 2019; Chandler and Jansen, 1992; Man et al., 2008; Mc Clelland, 1987). Among the identified factors, based on the results, competency approach has proven to be promising (Ahmad et al., 2010; Man et al., 2008; Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010). The current study therefore approaches the success from the perspective of entrepreneurial competencies and explores the role of entrepreneurial competencies in entrepreneurial success.

**3.1 Entrepreneurial Competencies**

Entrepreneurial competencies encapsulate the entrepreneur’s characteristics that include “general and specific knowledge, self-image, motive, social role, skills and traits” (Bird, 2019). Competencies are the behavioural demonstrations of entrepreneurial characteristics that represent total ability of entrepreneur. Based on the behavioural similarity the competencies have been clustered by multiple authors for example see table 1 (Ahmad, 2007b; Chandler and Jansen, 1992; Man and

Lau, 2000b; Mc Clelland, 1987; Mitchelmore et al., 2014; Mokhtar, 2017; Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015).

Table 1: Competency Clusters	
Author	Competency clusters
McClelland, 1986	“Concern for high-quality work, efficiency orientation, assertiveness, season acts on opportunity, initiative, systematic planning, efficiency orientation, commitment to work contract”.
Chandler and Jansen, 1992	“Recognition and taking advantage of opportunity, human competence, political competence, drive to see the firm creation through fruition, conceptual competence and expertise in technical aspects”.
Chandler and Hanks, 1994	“Entrepreneurial competencies and managerial competencies”.
Baum, 1994	“Cognitive ability, knowledge, self-management, human resource, administration, decision skill, opportunity recognition, leadership and opportunity development”.
Baron and Markman, 2000	“Social perception, impression management, persuasion and social influence, and social adaptability”
Georgellis et al., 2000	“Capacity to plan ahead, capacity to innovate and capacity to take the risk”.
Man and Lau, 2000	“Commitment, opportunity, relationship, conceptual, organising and strategic competencies”
Robert Baum et al., 2001	“General Competency (organisational skills and opportunity skills) and specific competencies (industry skill and technical skill)”
Man, 2000	“Commitment, opportunity, relationship, conceptual, organising, strategic, learning and personal strength competencies”.
Ahmad, 2007	“Conceptual, commitment, strategic, opportunity, learning, organising and leading, relationship, personal, technical, ethical, familism and social responsibility competencies”.
Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2013	“Personal and relationship competencies, entrepreneurial competencies, business and management competencies and human relations competencies”.
Mokhtar, 2017	“Personal effectiveness competencies, academic competencies, entrepreneurship technical competencies, workplace competencies and industrial competencies”.

Source: ‘The Author’

These behaviours act as the enablers in performing a specific task or a job, such that the task is successfully completed and desired results are achieved (Man et al., 2002). Previous research provides the evidence about the association of entrepreneurial competencies with birth, survival and growth of the venture. According to Bird, when the relationship of entrepreneur with performance is in consideration, entrepreneurial competencies are seen more relevant than other entrepreneurial characteristics e.g. entrepreneur’s personality, traits or motivations etc (Bird, 1995). and predominant evidence suggests a positive correlation between competencies and firm performance (Wiklund, 1999).

Furthermore, entrepreneurial competencies are believed to influence the venture performance and have a long-term impact on success (Bird, 2019). The deficiency of competencies is found to hamper the performance (Tehseen et al., 2019; Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015).

Since competencies are a set of behaviours therefore, these are observable and learnable (Man and Lau, 2000a; Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010). Researchers suggest that importance of competencies must be recognised and thereby the competencies must be identified because competencies

are learnable and improvable and therefore, crucial for educators (Mitchelmore and Rowley 2010). Researchers also argue that entrepreneurial competencies must be developed in entrepreneur so that the long-term and positive impacts on performance could be achieved (Man et al., 2002). To unravel the supposed linkage between competencies and success multiple studies have been carried out in stable contexts. The results verified the claims of association between entrepreneurial competencies and success. Table 2 enlists some of the identified competency clusters linked to success.

**Table 2:** List of competencies and place of study.

Author	Competencies Linked to Success	Place of Study
Mc Clelland, 1987	“Concern for high-quality work, efficiency orientation, assertiveness, season acts on opportunity, initiative, systematic planning, efficiency orientation, commitment to work contract.”	Ecuador, Malawi, Gujrat
Chandler and Jansen, 1992	“Recognition and taking advantage of opportunity, human competence, political competence, drive to see the firm creation through fruition, conceptual competence and expertise in technical aspects”.	Utah
Chandler and Hanks, 1994	“Entrepreneurial competencies and managerial competencies”.	Utah
Georgellis et al., 2000	“Capacity to plan ahead, capacity to innovate and capacity to take the risk”.	London
Man and Lau, 2000b	“Commitment, opportunity, relationship, conceptual, organising and strategic competencies”	Hong Kong
Robert Baum et al., 2001	“General Competency (organisational skills and opportunity skills) and specific competencies (industry skill and technical skill)”	U.S.
Man, 2001	“Commitment, opportunity, relationship, conceptual, organising, strategic, learning and personal strength competencies.”	Hongkong
Ahmad, 2007b	“Conceptual, commitment, strategic, opportunity, learning, organising and leading, relationship, personal, technical, ethical, familism and social responsibility competencies.”	Australia & Malaysia
Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2013	“Personal and relationship competencies, entrepreneurial competencies, business and management competencies and human relations competencies.”	England & Wales
Mokhtar, 2017	“Personal effectiveness competencies, academic competencies, entrepreneurship technical competencies, workplace competencies and industrial competencies.”	Malaysia
Tehseen et al., 2019	“Strategic competency and ethical competency”	Malaysia
Tehseen and Anderson, 2020	“Opportunity, ethical, familism, conceptual, strategic, learning and personal competencies.”	Malaysia

Source: ‘The Author’

The study of this relationship is clearly missing in the conflict context. The current study, therefore, aims to, specifically, study the relationship of strategic, conceptual and commitment competencies on entrepreneurial success in the conflict-zone Kashmir.

### 3.1.1 Strategic competencies

The entrepreneurial behaviour requires the entrepreneur to develop detailed plans of the potential idea and implement those plans so that the idea can be brought to life (Olson and Bosserman, 1984). The strategic competency encapsulates this ability of detailed planning to orient the functional areas strategically (Man et al., 2008). It is the competency which involves various activities of setting strategy for the firm, evaluating it and then implementing the strategy to ensure long-term performance (Man et al., 2002). Researchers across the field of entrepreneurship have argued that the strategic competency has the requirements for the entrepreneurs of being the visionary, creation of a big picture of the business in the minds, envisioning clear goals and formulation and implementation of the strategies to realise the vision and achieve the goals. Multiple authors have associated these competencies with performance in a stable environment (Ahmad, 2007b; Man and Lau, 2000b; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020). We argue that strategic competencies will impact the performance and therefore success of entrepreneur in a conflict zone also.

### 3.1.2 Conceptual competencies

A group researchers describe the conceptual competencies as the conceptual abilities of an entrepreneur in making cognitive and analytical thinking and involve high level conceptual activities such as decision

making and absorbing and understanding complex information (Man et al., 2002). These competencies involve behaviours such as learning, analysing, solving problems, making decisions, sustaining temporal tension, innovating, coping with uncertainty and assuming the risk (Man and Lau, 2000b; Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015). Researchers emphasise upon the importance of the conceptual competencies for an entrepreneur to be successful in entrepreneurial endeavour and argue that these competencies such as innovativeness, ability of conception of new idea, discovery of unrecognised relationships, analysis of ideas, rational, logical, and analytical thinking are the basic composition of entrepreneurial behaviour. Conceptual competencies have been found to impact the firm performance in stable contexts (Ahmad, 2007a; Man and Lau, 2000b; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020; Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015). We, argue that commitment competencies will impact entrepreneurial success in a conflict zone also.

### 3.1.3 Commitment Competencies

Dedication, motivation, persistence, perseverance, resistance to failure, commitment, hard-work, drive and behaviours like these have often been associated with the characteristics of entrepreneurs in pursuit of success and such behaviours have been encapsulated in the commitment competencies (Ahmad, 2007a; Bird, 1988; Man, 2001; McClelland, 1987; Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2013; Olson and Bosserman, 1984; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020; Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015). These competencies have been found to impact success in stable contexts, we therefore argue that commitment competencies will impact entrepreneurial success in a conflict zone also.

Considering the evidence in previous literature we hypothesise that in conflict-zone context

**H1:** Strategic competencies have a positive and significant impact on the success

**H2:** Conceptual competencies have a positive and significant impact on the success

**H3:** Commitment competencies have a positive and significant impact on the success

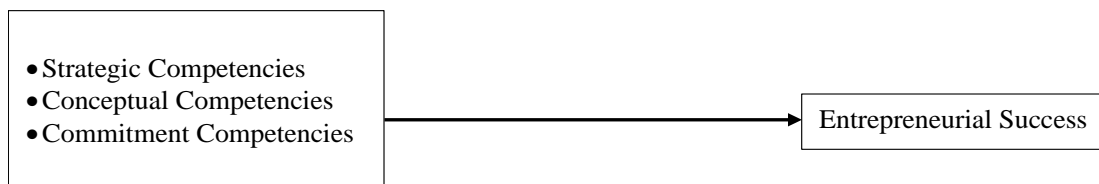


Figure 1: Conceptual model (Source: ‘The Author’)

3.2 Entrepreneurial Success

The concept of entrepreneurial success differs in its actuality among individuals. Success might mean increase in financial aspects for a group or individual whereas for some other group or individual it might mean improvement of non-financial aspects. Personal ideas of the entrepreneur are an important determinant of his idea about entrepreneurial success and as such among the entrepreneur the definition of success varies (Chatterjee and Das, 2016). Entrepreneurial success in the entrepreneurship literature, however, has been associated with “the survival, being basic measure of success, firm performance and firm growth” (Bosma et al., 2000; Tsai et al., 1991; Davidsson, 1991; Chandler and Hanks, 1993; Zahra, 1993). To measure success the use of financial indicators and non-financial indicators has been debated by the experts, but emphasis has been laid on use of both indicators. In the current study, we, used financial indicators as well as non-financial indicators to measure entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, for measuring entrepreneurial success, researchers have used self-reported measure of indicators for assessment of success. Current study also banked upon the use of self-reported responses (Ahmad et al., 2010; Chandler and Jansen, 1992; Man, 2001; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020).

4. METHODS

4.3 Profile of the Sample: See Table 3

Table 3: Profile of the entrepreneurs and firms		
Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	192	72.4
Female	73	27.5
<b>Age</b>		
Upto 30 years	77	29.05
30 to 60 years	137	51.6
Above 60 years	51	19.2
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Undergraduate	93	35.09
Graduate	133	50.18
Post Graduate	39	14.7
<b>Firm Age</b>		
3 to 10 years	44	16.6
11 to 20 years	116	43.7
20 to 30 years	105	39.6

4.4 Inferential Analysis

The data was initially tested for kurtosis and skewness. Upon testing, the data was found multivariate non-normal (Kline, 2011). Which lead to further analysis of data using the SmartPLS 3.3.3 software, because of its ability to analyse the non-normal data (Ringle et al., 2015). Using a two stage disjoint approach, the SEM analysis was performed on the data and measurement model and structural model were assessed (Leguina, 2015). Entrepreneurial success was assessed as a higher order construct; therefore, Two Stage Disjoint Approach was used (Leguina, 2015). Bootstrapping procedure used 5000 sub-sample to analyse the data for deducing the path coefficients, loadings, and level of significance (Leguina, 2015).

4.1 Survey and Sampling

The owners of SMEs who actively participated in the daily operations of business and whose businesses were operational for not less than three years were chosen for the study (Ahmad, 2007a; Tehseen and Anderson, 2020). The entrepreneurs whose businesses operated in manufacturing, service and retailing sectors were selected for the study. We identified entrepreneurs from a list provided by Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) and State Industrial Development Corporation (SIDCO) Jammu and Kashmir. A questionnaire was administered to the founders/ owners of the firms to collect the responses. The data was collected through personal meetings. Entrepreneurs were assured about confidentiality of information. Finally, the researchers were able to select 265 complete responses which fulfils the minimum sample size requirements (Westland, 2010).

4.2 Measurement

Impact of 3 competency clusters which include the strategic, conceptual and commitment competencies on entrepreneurial success was investigated. The standard questionnaire was used to acquire the data from respondents. The competency clusters and success were measured on a Likert type (1-5) scale using the items adopted from (Ahmad, 2007). The success was measured using the scale that rated the satisfaction on multiple financial and non-financial indicators (Ahmad, 2007a).

4.5 Evaluation of Measurement Model

Evaluation of measurement model involved determining relationships between the indicator variables and constructs. To evaluate the measurement, model the analysis for assessment of reliability and validity was performed (Brück et al., 2013; Naudé, 2007a; Shaza et al., 2018). The values for Chronbach’s Alpha, rho\_A and composite reliability were above the requisite values of 0.6 (see Table 3) thereby establishing reliability and validity of the model. The model was investigated for establishing the convergent validity and AVE of all constructs were above 0.50 see Table 3 (Leguina, 2015). HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait) ratio criterion by assessed the discriminant validity Henseler et al., 2010; Kline, 2011). Validity of second order construct, success was established by assessment of significance of the outer weights.

Table 4: Assessment of reliability and validity						
Constructs	Code	Loadings	Chronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Strategic Competencies	STRC1	0.722	0.842	0.847	0.880	0.513
	STRC2	0.710				
	STRC3	0.682				
	STRC4	0.686				
	STRC5	0.717				
	STRC6	0.707				
	STRC 7	0.785				
Commitment Competencies	CMTC1	0.800	0.893	0.905	0.920	0.698
	CMTC2	0.862				
	CMTC3	0.840				
	CMTC4	0.848				
	CMTC5	0.825				
Conceptual competencies	CONC1	0.812	0.854	0.863	0.895	0.630
	CONC2	0.799				
	CONC3	0.794				
	CONC4	0.766				
	CONC5	0.798				
Financial Performance	FPER1	0.856	0.857	0.908	0.896	0.638
	FPER2	0.885				
	FPER3	0.886				
	FPER4	0.726				
	FPER5	0.600				
Non-financial Performance	NFP1	0.515	0.770	0.803	0.845	0.531
	NFP2	0.836				
	NFP3	0.581				
	NFP4	0.810				
	NFP5	0.835				

Table 5: Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion)				
	CMTC	CONC	FPER	NFPER
CONC	0.741			
FPER	0.187	0.262		
NFPER	0.259	0.401	0.497	
STRC	0.609	0.598	0.457	0.56

4.6 Evaluation of Structural Model

For structural model evaluation, initially the data was checked for issues

Table 6: Direct Effect Assessment					
Hypothesis		Loading	T Statistics	P Values	Result
H1	STRC -> SUCCESS	0.520	6.988	0.000	Accepted
H2	CMTC-> SUCCESS	0.159	2.018	0.010	Accepted
H3	CONC -> SUCCESS	0.186	2.586	0.044	Accepted

5. FINDINGS

The results based on analysis of the data lead to the acceptance of hypothesised relationship between strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies and entrepreneurial success. The results reveal that there is a significant positive impact of strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies on entrepreneurial success in a conflict zone (Abdul et al., 2017; Ahmad, 2007a; Lopa and Bose, 2015; Mitchelmore et al., 2014; Tehseen et al., 2019). The data revealed that, among the evaluated competencies, strategic competencies had the highest impact. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.29 revealed that variance explained by exogenous constructs i.e. strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies variance in the endogenous construct i.e. entrepreneurial success is high suggesting the high predictive accuracy of the model (Hair et al., 2017). When analysed for effect size (f<sup>2</sup>) the values were moderate for strategic competencies and weak for commitment and conceptual competencies (Cohen, 1988). The analysis to check the predictive relevance Q<sup>2</sup> of the model revealed that model had a good predictive relevance as the value was 0.20 (Leguina, 2015; Hair et al., 2017). Therefore, it may be concluded that on the basis of data analysis it has been found that the entrepreneurial

in collinearity. The results of analysis revealed that VIF for all latent constructs was below 5. Next using 5000 resample in bootstrapping procedure the strength and significance of relationship between dependent and independent variables was ascertained (Leguina, 2015). As shown in Table 4, the results revealed that there was positive and significant impact of strategic competencies (B=0.520, T=6.988, p=0.000), commitment competencies (B=0.159, T=2.018, p=0.010), and conceptual competencies (B=0.186, T=2.586, p=0.044) on entrepreneurial success.

Furthermore, R<sup>2</sup> of the structural model returned the value of 0.30. The f<sup>2</sup> values for strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies were 0.25, 0.01 and 0.02. The blindfolding procedure using the omission distance of 7 returned the Q<sup>2</sup> value of 0.20.

competencies including strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies play a substantial role in the success of entrepreneurial endeavours in a conflict zone.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study was aimed to evaluate the role of entrepreneurial competencies in making an entrepreneurial effort successful in a conflict zone. To explore and understand this issue we conducted a study in a conflict zone Kashmir. We studied the impact of three entrepreneurial competencies including strategic, commitment and conceptual competencies on success of entrepreneur. We found that the entrepreneurial competencies were predictors of entrepreneurial success. We also found that the model that predicted the determinants of success through competencies had a substantial predictive accuracy and relevance. Specifically, strategic competencies had a high impact on success of entrepreneur. Strategic competency cluster in the current study was operationalized in terms of the behaviours such as “: (i) being aware of the projected directions and how changes might affect the firm, (ii) prioritising work in alignment with business goals, (iii) redesigning the

firm to better meet the firm's objectives, (iv) aligning current actions with strategic goals, (v) monitoring progress toward strategic goals, (vi) evaluating results against strategic goals, and (vii) determining strategic actions by weighing costs and benefits." Although, such behaviours were found to impact the success positively in the previous works of research in stable contexts for example, the current study established the significant positive impact in conflict zone.

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This research is a small addition to the knowledge and understanding of the entrepreneurship in conflict zone. The insights about the role of entrepreneur in achieving success has been highlighted. Responding to the call of multiple experts the quantitative study has been carried out reflecting the conflict zone scenario. The findings of this research have implications on the researchers, entrepreneurs, stakeholders, entrepreneurship development institutes and educational institutes that teach and train students regarding the entrepreneurship in the conflict zones. The relevance and importance of entrepreneur as a determinant of successful entrepreneurial pursuit in a conflict zone has been proven. Further, government agencies, policy makers and other stake holders might benefit if findings of this study are taken into consideration while formulating the policies in favour of entrepreneurs in a conflict zone. Since competencies are learnable therefore, the findings of this research might prove to be of some value to the Government of Kashmir in drafting the training and development programs for entrepreneurs. The results of the study are expected to provide insights to the entrepreneurs, governments and other stakeholders in a conflict zone. Especially, the institutions which impart entrepreneurship education and training in a conflict zone are provided with empirical evidence that competencies are an important asset for the successful entrepreneurial outcome. Because competencies are learnable and could be enhanced, special considerations should be given to entrepreneurial competencies.

## LIMITATIONS

This current research has undertaken a limited number of competency variables for study whereas numerous competencies have been identified in the literature. Due to the limitations and challenges of data collection in a conflict zone the researcher could only study the effect of limited competencies on success. Furthermore, the sample size was also limited to 265 only due to challenging scenario of the conflict zone. There were certainly other limitations in the current study which are a possibility for the future research. The future research might look to explore the competencies specific to the conflict zone entrepreneurs. Apart from considering the entrepreneur the future research might look into exploring the determinants of success from organisational and environmental perspective.

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