

## **Evaluation, Classification and Selection of Marketing Strategies to Enter International Markets by Using SWOT Method (Case Study of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company)**

Parisa Fazeli and Fariz Taherikia

Department of Business Management, Islamic Azad University, Firoozkooh Branch,  
Firoozkooh, Iran

---

**Abstract:** The aim of this research is to evaluate, classify and select marketing strategies to enter international markets in Takhte Jamshid petrochemical company. This research is applied in terms of goal and descriptive in terms of nature and survey in terms of data collection method. The statistical population includes senior and middle managers and senior experts of Takhte Jamshid petrochemical company pundits and experts active in this industry (300 persons). The sample size was estimated 100 persons based on Cochran formula who were selected by simple random sampling. Researcher-made-questionnaire, including of 40 questions was used for data collection. This questionnaire was formed to select marketing strategies to enter international markets by using the SWOT method. It includes four parts of strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment and opportunities and threats existing in the external environment of Takhte jamshid petrochemical company. Internal and external evaluation matrix by using expert choice software was used to analyze the data. Results showed acceptable strategies' position of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company in order to marketing to enter international markets is offensive strategies due to the placement in the first quarter of internal and external matrix. For this purpose, so, strategies are emphasized in current conditions of marketing development of this company and its strategies according to the intended structures tends to the side that to be able to reach in a worthy position by using its adopted strategies and policies.

**Key words:** Strategy, international marketing, internal environment, external environment, emphasized

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Codification of strategy enables firm to act actively (effective) and not just in a reactive form (impressible) so the firm becomes ready to encounter with environmental controlled and uncontrolled issues. The required organizational strategies for growth and success of manufacturing firms are enabled to become distinct based on technological and commercial innovation or based on the focus on the part of the services and products market (Ahanchi, 2007).

Even if these strategies are also applied, each developing organization in line with the different stages of its life cycle is faced with various problems. However, use of these strategies is emphasized as an effective tool in successful management of company in the competitive environment (Rezai-Nejad, 2001).

One of the most important decisions is attention to the selection of entry mode in the process of companies' internationalization (Quer *et al.*, 2007). Choosing a mode for entering Foreign markets can have important and

extensive consequences in the performance and survival of the company. Input mode is one of the most vital strategic options because it affects decision-making and the future operations of the company in selected countries' market. There are several theories to explain input mode selection such as Transaction Cost Analysis (TCA) organizational theory, selective pattern and theory based on observation. Resources of many of them have been designed for large companies (Kotler and Armstrong, 2007). But, whether such theories can be used to interpret the behavior of small and medium companies is now uncertain (Lee *et al.*, 2011).

Choosing the best strategy for entering Foreign markets depends on different factors that company must evaluate them before entering Foreign markets. Some of these factors are internal and specific to a particular company or a particular industry. The other group of factors that are separate from company and its industry can be called as external factors, like the laws of the Foreign country and the amount of risk. Different methods of entering market from the perspective of international

marketing show control, commitment, participation and risk levels (Albaum *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, fundamental decision in this regard depends on the way to supply goods in the specific market, decision to issue goods or production in this place.

One of the concerns of developing countries in global trade in recent years is their low competition power. Given the strategic importance of manufacturing firms in national and provincial economy for reasons such as: having very important role in employment, participation in regional development, international trade development, creation of healthy competition and prevention of monopoly and provision of proper context of skills and innovations, uncertainty on them may lead to persistence in lack of participation in export (Zargari, 2005).

Industry changes process and rapid changes of technology imports an intensive competitive pressure on the companies' economy. Iran country in these competitive conditions must develop its industry along national interests, values and interests and compatible with the environment and global trends by relying on its abilities and based on the specific strategy and program. The necessity of this affair is while many industries of the country have a lot of capabilities to enter the international markets (Elmi, 2009).

Petrochemical industry in Iran has antiquity close to 40 years. The researches have shown petrochemical sector has had the greatest effectiveness in adoption of export development policy on economic growth after sector of other mines except oil and gas (non-oil export) and has the second rank among the country's economic sectors (non-oil).

The statistical population of this research is senior and middle managers and senior experts of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company and pundits and experts active in this industry since management science considers organization's senior managers responsible for the responsibility and duty of codifying strategy and because senior managers should have a systematic view about the goals and mission of the organization. Hence, the main issue in the present research is that: What are the strategies to enter international markets in the petrochemical industry based on SWOT analysis?

**Theoretical literature:** Strategies are a tool by which the company can achieve its long-term goals. Company's strategies can be in form of developing activity in geographical level, diversifying activities, buying other companies, production and supply of product, market penetration, reduction of costs, sale of items of assets, devolution of many authorities and formation of private partnerships (Houben *et al.*, 1999).

Strategic management process can be studied in a best possible way and be applied by using a pattern. This pattern never guarantees the company's success but provides a clear and practical way for codifying strategies, implementing and evaluating them. Logically, starting point of the discussion on strategic management is that to begin research by determining the mission, long-term goals and current strategies of the organization. This is because the current situation or conditions of a company can indicate specified and definite strategies and even it may show a specified path (the intended way or option of strategists).

Strategic management process is dynamic and continuous. Change in pillars of the pattern will change some others or all components constituting the aforementioned pattern. Thus, activities that their implementation and evaluation is performed in the field of codifying strategies have permanent aspect and are not performed only at the end of the year or every six months. The fact is that strategic management process has no end.

Strategic management process in practice is not separated precisely and clearly as the steps have been provided in the strategic management pattern. Strategists do not codify this process in a closed space. There is usually a kind of sweep (exchange) between different organizational levels. Many organizations formally gather once every six months to revise on the organization's mission, threats and opportunities, strengths and weaknesses, strategies, long-term goals, policies and performances.

Formality level of strategic management in the organization are influenced by various factors including size of organization, management systems, environmental complexity, production process complexity, nature of problems and purpose of the planning system. Size a largeness of organization is considered a key factor. Small organizations do not act so formally in line with performing specialized tasks of strategic management (O'cass *et al.*, 2012).

(SWOT) matrix is one of the most important tools by which managers compare information and thereby can provide four types of strategies: Strengths-Opportunities strategies (SO), Weakness-Opportunities strategies (WO), Strengths-Threats strategies (ST), Weakness-Threats strategies (WT) (Table 1).

Table 1: The SWOT matrix

Variables	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
Opportunities (O)	Strengths-Opportunities strategies (SO)	Weakness-Opportunities strategies (WO)
Threats (T)	Strengths-Threats strategies (ST)	Weakness-Threats strategies (WT)

Table 2: The conceptual model of research

Final evaluation of internal factors			
WO	SO	WT	ST
Strategic review and conservatively (focusing on internal weaknesses and taking advantage of external opportunities)	Aggressive strategies / competitive (emphasis on internal strength and take advantage of external opportunities)	Defensive strategies (emphasis on external threats and internal, weaknesses, Finally, elimination of damages)	Diversity and competitive strategies (emphasis on internal strengths and external threats)

The firm in implementation of SO strategies tries to utilize external opportunities by using internal strengths. The aim of WO strategies is that the firm tries to improve internal weaknesses by utilizing the opportunities existing in the environment. Companies in implementation of ST strategy try to reduce or eliminate effects of threats existing in the external environment by using their strengths. Firms that implement WT strategies are defensive and the aim is to reduce internal weaknesses and avoid threats resulting from the external environment.

The purpose of external threats and opportunities is economic social, cultural, ecological, environmental, political, legal, governmental, technological and competitive events or trends that can greatly benefit or harm organization in the future. Opportunities and threats are greatly outside the control of an organization, hence they use the word of external (Mahdavi, 2004).

Internal strengths and weaknesses are placed among organization control activities that the organization performs it in an excellent or very poor way. They are created by managerial, marketing, finance accounting affairs, (production) operations, research and development and computer information systems. Organizations try to implement strategies so that internal strengths to be improved and internal weaknesses to be eliminated (or improved) .

**Research purposes**

**Main purpose:** Review, classification and selection of marketing strategies to enter international markets by using SWOT method (Case Study of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company).

**Secondary purposes:**

- Identifying the most important opportunities and threats of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company
- Identifying the most important strengths and weaknesses of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company
- Prioritizing issues and problems of Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company to enter Foreign markets
- Identifying the most appropriate strategies for Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company to enter Foreign markets

- Providing operational strategies for realization of strategies to enter Foreign markets

**Conceptual model:** Conceptual model of this research is planning and strategic management pattern of “Fred.R.david” can be imagined the strategic management process as a process of making a decision or solve problem. Thus, the strategic management is in decision-making process at the same time is formed with a holistic perspective of the planning stages to implementation and evaluation. In logical beginning of the process stabilization of goals and suitable development of strategies is formed. Then implementation of them is done by controlling the results of their evaluation. In other words, the strategic management process within the conventional and acceptable framework and pattern is presented as follows. This pattern consists of three following main sections:

- Formulating strategies
- Implementing strategies
- Evaluating strategies

Therefore, subject of this research is only the first part means strategy formulation that SWOT model is of conventional methods in the strategic formulation stage (Table 2).

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study is applied in terms of target and it is descriptive in terms of nature and based on data collection methods is survey. Statistical population includes senior and medium managers and senior experts of Takhte Jamshid petrochemical and scholars and experts active are in this industry (300 people).The sample size was estimated as 100 respondents based on a Cochran formula who were selected by simple random sampling. Questionnaire was used for data collection that consists of 40 questions which includes statements related to the internal and external factors. This questionnaire has been formed for choosing marketing strategies entry into international markets by using SWOT method and includes four parts:

- Weaknesses in the internal environment of petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid

Table 3: Test of questionnaire factor analysis

Variable	Number of questions	KMO	Bartlett's test	Degrees of freedom	Significant level
Value	40	0.76	1.988	380	0.000

- Strengths in the internal environment of petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid
- Opportunities available in the external environment of petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid
- Existing threats in the external environment of petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid

Formal and content validity was confirmed by the approval of petrochemical experts and professors and by using the Delphi technique. Construct validity of the questionnaire also was tested with factor analysis method. According to Table 3, the value of KMO is equal to 0.76 which indicates the sample size adequate and the value of Bartlett's test with a confidence level of 0.01 is equal to 1.988 which shows the factor separation is correct based on factor loadings and there is no overlapping among factors.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient method was used to determine the reliability of measuring tool. Since, the value obtained was over the 0.7 can be said the items have internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable. The internal and external evaluation matrix with the use of Expert Choice Software was used to analyze the data. Addition to studying existing situation with study of strategic position, petrochemical situation and position of Takhte Jamshid was determined with considering the type of strategy available on the coordinate axes of SWOT.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Which are the opportunities and threats obtained from the external environment Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical?** In the external factors evaluation matrix, regardless of the number of factors that make opportunity or a threat to enter the international markets of petrochemical company of Takhte Jamshid. Never, the final total score for that is never >4 or is not <1.

This means that this company according to the conditions of their different structures existing uses from opportunities available in successful manner and is reached the effect of factors that are under threat in its lowest level possible. The proximity of the final score to 1 (<5.2), Indicates that this company has been failed to utilize from factors that create opportunity or to be avoided from position or of factors that cause to threaten. Sum of final scores of external factors to enter into

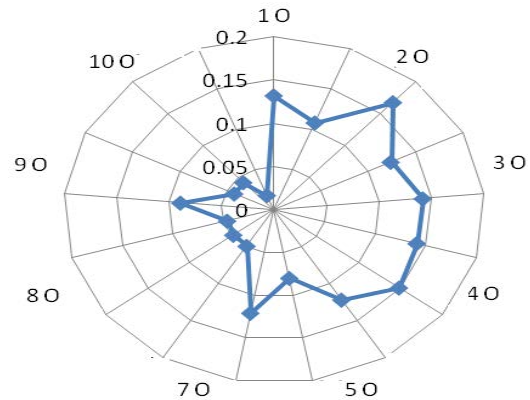


Fig. 1: Calculate the rating of each factor related to opportunities

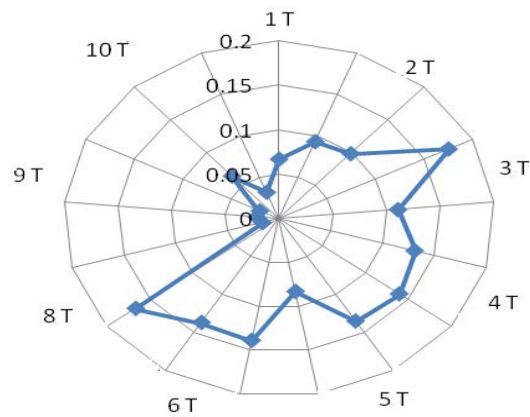


Fig. 2: Calculate the rating of each factor related to threats

international markets of petrochemical company of Takhte Jamshid is in evaluation matrix of external factors (2.21) (Table 4).

After entering the data in Expert Choice Software and the calculation of hierarchical model, the final ratings of factors were extracted as follows (Table 5).

Also calculation related to output of the model and the amount of effectiveness of each factor can be seen in Fig. 1 and 2. With regard to the external factors evaluation matrix and hierarchical model output (AHP) the most important opportunities that Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company in line with enter into international market is facing it include: factor “the existence of free trade zones as a good opportunity to cooperate with Foreign companies and create petrochemical and technological transfer” and Factor “public awareness to develop in the petrochemical industry” with a weight rating of (0.168) and (0.149) respectively have been identified as the first and second opportunity. Factor “increasing funding opportunities in the petrochemical industry” with a weighted rating of

Table 4: Evaluation matrix of external factors governing the entry to international markets (EFAS)

Factors	Factors	Importance (weight)	Rating (rating of factor)	Score (final rating)
<b>Opportunities</b>				
There is low distance of country with the global levels of new technologies such as nano, Pao and some polymers and catalysts	1O	0.032	4	0.127
There is interested to invest in the petrochemical industry by companies and domestic and Foreign investment	2O	0.029	4	0.117
There is the existence of free trade zones as an proper opportunity for cooperation with Foreign companies and establish petrochemical and technological transfer	3O	0.039	4	0.157
There is new markets, new customers and competitive advantages in the region	4O	0.034	4	0.137
There is increasing funding opportunities in the petrochemical industry	5O	0.033	4	0.134
There is possibility of increasing exporting products of SBR and PBR to the region	6O	0.033	4	0.130
There is public awareness in order to grow in the petrochemical industry	7O	0.035	4	0.140
There is increasing target market in the petrochemical industry	8O	0.037	4	0.147
There is customer complaints as an opportunity to improve the performance of processes in the petrochemical industry	9O	0.028	3	0.085
There is access to required infrastructure for oil industry, gas and petrochemical	10O	0.031	4	0.124
<b>Threats</b>				
There is funding for research and development in the petrochemical industry in sufficient amount	1T	0.028	2	0.055
There is strict legal requirements of the future in the petrochemical industry	2T	0.031	3	0.095
There is lack of customer satisfaction of products	3T	0.032	3	0.095
Many challenges and weakness in supportive laws in buyback contracts for domestic and Foreign investors	4T	0.038	4	0.154
There is change in produced grid of similar units in the region accordance with the requirements of customers	5T	0.03	4	0.120
There is no environmentally friendly customers	6T	0.033	4	0.134
There is inability to create similar projects in special economic zone	7T	0.037	4	0.147
There is environmental requirements and international standards related to the industry	8T	0.035	4	0.14
Profit margin of petrochemical products in special economic zone is satisfactory	9T	0.029	3	0.088
there is instability in petrochemical economic policies	10T	0.034	4	0.137
Total		1.000	-	2.210

Table 5: Calculation of final rating of external factors on the basis of SWOT-AHP model

Factors	1O	2O	3O	4O	5O	6O	7O	8O	9O	10O
Rating model	0.132	0.108	0.168	0.124	0.142	0.141	0.149	0.122	0.08	0.121
AHP	9	15	2	11	4	5	3	12	19	13
Rank	1T	2T	3T	4T	5T	6T	7T	8T	9T	10T
Factors	0.067	0.093	0.099	0.176	0.111	0.131	0.14	0.135	0.083	0.139
final rating model	20	17	16	1	14	10	6	8	18	7

(0.142) is located as the third opportunity ahead for this company. Also factors “possibility of increasing exporting products of SBR and PBR in the region” and “shorter distance of country with global levels of new technologies such as nanotechnology, Pao and some polymers and catalysts” respectively by rating of (0.141) and (0.132) are in next priority.

At the same time, Factor “many challenges and weakness in supportive laws in buyback contracts for domestic and Foreign investors”, with the final rating of (0.176) and also Factor “inability to create similar projects in special economic zone” with a weighted rating of (0.147) is considered as the most important threat ahead of this company in this way. Also, factors “instability in petrochemical economic policies, environmental requirements and international standards related to the industry are next rankings among the factors threatening in this way.

Which are factors and the strengths and weaknesses obtained from petrochemical internal environment of Takhte Jamshid?

The internal factors (2.02) are sum of final scores of internal factors in evaluation matrix. This score means that the different circumstances of this company in terms of internal factors is susceptible to enter into international markets (Table 6).

As a result of its major strategies should be developed in such a way that can be used these strengths to overcome weaknesses.

After entering the data in Expert Choice Software and the calculation of hierarchical model, the final ratings the factors were extracted as follows (Table 7).

Also calculations related to output of the model and the amount of effectiveness of each factor can be seen in Fig. 3 and 4.

With regard to the internal factors evaluation matrix and in the perspective of experts and hierarchical model outputs (AHP) final rating and amount of effectiveness of each factor the most important opportunities that Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company in line with enter of this company in to international market is as follow.

Table 6: Evaluation Matrix of domestic factors governing the Takhte Jamshid petrochemical Company (IFAS)

Title	Factors name	Importance (weight)	Rating (rating of factor)	Score (final rating)
<b>Internal strengths</b>				
There is the possibility of training young specialists based on old professional experience of petrochemical units	1S	0.024	2	0.049
There is number of multiple petrochemical centers in the industry with a variety capabilities and various facilities	2S	0.029	3	0.086
There is advantage of cheap gas feedstock in the petrochemical industry	3S	0.028	3	0.085
There is the possibility of development and sales of various products in the global diverse and flexible markets in petrochemical industry	4S	0.04	4	0.162
There is the possibility of reducing transport costs in the petrochemical industry	5S	0.039	4	0.154
There is Improve the process of efficiency in the Takhte jamshid petrochemical	6S	0.039	4	0.156
There is possibility of creating innovation in petrochemical of Takhte jamshid	7S	0.04	4	0.158
There is access for downstream industries to petrochemical products of Takhte Jamshid in the petrochemical industry	8S	0.036	2	0.071
There is increasing the share of the company's products in international markets in the petrochemical industry	9S	0.035	2	0.07
There is relying on creativity, innovation and integration in all human resources in the petrochemical industry	10S	0.038	3	0.114
<b>Internal weaknesses</b>				
There is weakness in communicating the pilots with industrial units	1W	0.025	1	0.025
There is lack of attention to short-term and long-term policymaking	2W	0.027	3	0.082
There is disproportionate the growth of complexes and petrochemical production units and special areas by growth and petrochemical capabilities	3W	0.031	2	0.061
There is weakness in futures studies and analysis of global markets	4W	0.033	2	0.066
There is shortage in line of SBR to feedstock	5W	0.024	2	0.047
There is a shortage of hydrocarbon feedstock styrene	6W	0.038	4	0.151
There is a shortage of butadiene feedstock	7W	0.033	3	0.100
There is PLANT less capacity compared to existing customers in the region	8W	0.040	4	0.160
There is a Complex large distance of Mahshahr Port	9W	0.038	3	0.113
There is lack of rapid flexibility of Grid Changing	10W	0.040	3	0.119
Total		1.000	-	2.020

Table 7: Calculating the final rating based on internal factors of (SWOT-AHP) model

Factors	1S	2S	3S	4S	5S	6S	7S	8S	9S	10S
Rating	1.192925	4.360346	3.373097	6.293706	3.784451	3.990128	4.401481	2.221308	3.002879	3.290827
Rank	20	6	10	1	8	7	5	18	13	12
Factor	1W	2W	3W	4W	5W	6W	7W	8W	9W	10W
Rating	2.097902	5.100782	2.797203	2.46812	2.303579	4.977376	2.838338	5.635541	3.455368	3.578774
Rank	19	3	15	16	17	4	14	2	11	9

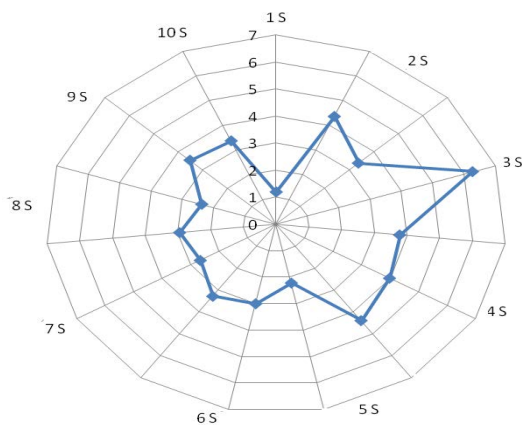


Fig. 3: Calculating the rating of each factor related to strengths

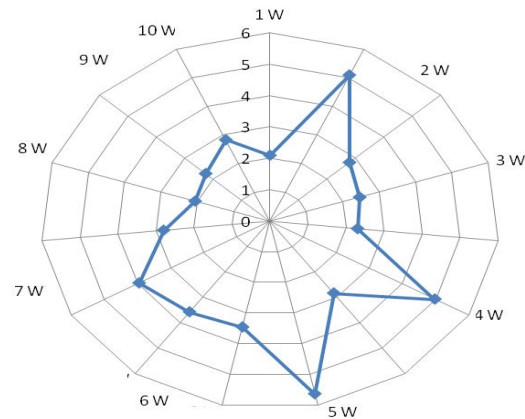


Fig. 4: Calculating the rating of each factor related to weaknesses

“The possibility of the development and sale of various products in global diverse and flexible markets in

petrochemical industry” with weighted rating (6.29) in the development of marketing of enter into international

markets have the greatest impact and is the most important strengths ahead of this company. Also factors' ability to create innovation in the petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid "," number of multiple petrochemical centers in industry with a variety capabilities and diverse facilities "and factor" improving the process of efficiency in the petrochemical of Takhte Jamshid with gaining rating of (4.4), (4.36) and (3.99), respectively were obtained the second, third and fourth rankings of effectiveness of strengths.

Also based on calculations done among the factors related to the weaknesses, factor "low capacity of plant in proportion of existing customers in the region" with the weighted rating of (5.63) is as the most important weaknesses in order to enter the international markets. "Lack of attention to short-term and long-term policy making" with weighted rating of (5.1) is in second rank of effectiveness of this petrochemical company.

In terms of experts, factors of lack of Hydrocarbons styrene feedstock, lack of rapid flexibility of the Grid changing and the large distance of the complex from Mahshahr port, with the final rating of (4.97), (3.5), (3.4) respectively, are in the next ranking of effectiveness on entry of this company to the international markets.

## CONCLUSION

The performed analyses results of this company showed that: the most important opportunities that Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company encounters with it in order to enter the international market are: factor of "existence of free trade zones as an appropriate opportunity to cooperate with Foreign companies and create petrochemical and transfer technology" and factor of "public awareness in order to grow in petrochemical industry". These two factors have been identified as the first and second opportunities with obtaining weighted rating of (0.168) and (0.149), respectively.

Factor of "increasing financial opportunities in petrochemical industry" with weighted rating of (0.142) is as the third opportunity ahead of the company. Also factors of "the possibility to increase export of SBR and PBR products to the region" and "short distance of the company with the global levels of new technologies such as nano, pao and some polymers and catalysts" are in the next priority with obtaining weighted rating of (0.141) and (0.132), respectively.

The final rating and the amount of effectiveness of each of the factors to this company's entry into international markets is as follows according to internal environment evaluation matrix from the perspective of experts; and specialists and outputs of the hierarchical

model (AHP): "The possibility of developing and selling various products in diverse and flexible global markets in petrochemical industry" with weighted rating of (6.29) has the most effect in the development of marketing to enter international markets and is the most important strength ahead of this company.

In addition, factors of "the possibility of creating innovation in Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company", the number of multiple petrochemical centers in industry with different capabilities and various possibilities "and factor of "improving productivity process in Takhte Jamshid petrochemical company" gained the second, third and fourth effectiveness ranks among strengths with obtaining ratings of (4.4), (4.36) and (3.99), respectively. Also based on the calculations performed among the factors related to weaknesses, factor of "plant low capacity compared with the existing customers in the region" with weighted rating of (5.63) is as the most important weaknesses in order to enter the international markets. "Lack of attention to short-term and long-term policymaking" with weighted rating of (5.1) is in the second rank affecting this petrochemical company.

In the next step acceptable strategies among these strategies were selected after formulation of strategies from comparing the internal and external factors in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) matrix. Acceptable strategies position of Takhte Jamshid petrochemical company for marketing to enter the international markets due to placing in the first quarter of internal and external matrix is aggressive strategies. For this purpose, in the present circumstances the marketing development of this company is emphasized on SO strategies. And its strategies according to the structures intended tend side to be able for reaching it in its proper position by using strategies and measures taken. Therefore, the following recommendations in order to achieve the objectives of marketing strategies into international markets are provided as follows.

## SUGGESTIONS

**Providing operational guidelines for the realization of the strategies to enter Foreign markets:** Issues and problems related to Takhte Jamshid Petrochemical Company in entering Foreign markets cannot be immediately improved but also improve the current situation requires many measures and actions and suggestions that is offered it is for overcoming the current situation of that. So following strategies are recommended:

- Paying attention to customer needs and market research, for designing features of the product which is important in maintaining a competitive advantage in the market

- Production of certain grades of imported products that customers need to them and they are not produced in Iran for reasons
- Attracting domestic and Foreign investors to meet shortages required for company such as feed of SBR; hydrocarbons styrene butadiene feed
- Supportive legislation in buyback contracts for domestic and Foreign investors
- The use of young specialists for research in the field of development of research and the allocation of funding for research and development in the petrochemical industry
- Create more added value in the company by attracting investors in particular toward eliminating needs and limitations of the Company
- Adopting a policy of sustainable strategy in the context of export development strategy
- Attention to regionalism in market development
- Coordination between agencies responsible for this industry with the country's trade sector

#### **REFERENCES**

- Ahanchi, M., 2007. Strategic Management. Nvbrmdyryt Strategic Approach and Theory of Operation. Arms of Tehran, Tehran.
- Albaum, G.S., J. Strandskov and E. Duerr, 2002. International Marketing and Export Management. 4th Edn., Prentice Hall, London.
- Elmi, M., 2009. Development of Export Competitive Environment. 1st Edn., Iran Trade Promotion Organization, Tehran.
- Houben, G., K. Lenie and K. Vanhoof, 1999. A knowledge-based SWOT-analysis system as an instrument for strategic planning in small and medium sized enterprises. *Decis. Support Syst.*, 26: 125-135.
- Kotler, P. and G. Armstrong, 2007. Principles of Marketing. Translation Feb Phosphors. Times Prentice Hall, Tehran.
- Lee, H.H., T.T. Yang, C.B. Chen and Y.L. Chen, 2011. A fuzzy hierarchy integral analytic expert decision process in evaluating foreign investment entry mode selection for Taiwanese bio-tech firms. *Expert Syst. Applic.*, 38: 3304-3322.
- Mahdavi, M., 2004. The role of tourism in the development of rural areas by using SWOT. Master's Thesis, Faculty of Humanities, Tarbiat Modarres University.
- O'Cass, A., L.V. Ngo and N. Heirati, 2012. Examining market entry mode strategies via resource-based and institutional influences: Empirical evidence from a region-within-country economy context. *Aust. Market. J.*, 20: 224-233.
- Quer, D., E. Claver and R. Andreu, 2007. Foreign market entry mode in the hotel industry: The impact of country-and firm-specific factors. *Int. Bus. Rev.*, 16: 362-376.
- Rezaei-Nejad, A., 2001. International Marketing. Islamic Azad University, Tehran.
- Zargari, M.J., 2005. International Marketing Strategy. 2nd Edn., Publication of Deliberation, Mashhad.